



NAVY NEWS

August 2016



Hail the Lightning

● The British public got to see the future of the Fleet Air Arm with the UK debut of the F-35B Lightning II strike fighter. The jets – one from the UK and one from the US Marine Corps – were escorted by a Hawk from 736 NAS during a flypast over HMS Queen Elizabeth and Prince of Wales in Rosyth (see pages 2-3)

Eyes of the Tigers

Merlins put to test in Deep Blue 2

Sense of Yuma

Wildcat put to test in the desert



HERE COMES THE FUTURE

THEIR wing tips leaving trails of water vapour streaking over the unusually-clear blue North Sea, this is the first sight of the Navy's jets of tomorrow in British skies.

Three F-35B Lightning II jets – the type that will operate from the Royal Navy's two aircraft carriers – were flown across the Atlantic to show the UK public what the fifth-generation fighters are capable of.

It took nine hours to bring the three jets – one British, two American – across the ocean from their training base at Beaufort in South Carolina.

At the controls of the British F-35B, RAF pilot Sqn Ldr Hugh Nichols, accompanied by two US Marine Corps stealthy jump jets – identical but for their national markings.

Each plane was refuelled five times on the crossing courtesy of two US Air Force KC-10 tankers.

Once safely across 3,000 miles of ocean, the trio began a publicity tour of the British Isles, beginning with a fly-past of their future seagoing homes – HMS Queen Elizabeth and Prince of Wales, currently in build in Rosyth Dockyard (*pictured, bottom right*).

As they flew over the carriers on the Forth the stealth fighters were joined by Hawk jets from 736 Naval Air Squadron, based at RNAS Culdrose – the self-styled home of Naval carrier aviation.

The planes also conducted a fly-past of their future land base, RAF Marham in Norfolk.

The jets, due to enter service with the Royal Navy and RAF from 2018, are the most advanced aircraft ever built for the UK's Armed Forces and will be operated initially by the RAF's legendary 617 Squadron ('The Dambusters') and 'The Immortals' 809 Naval Air Squadron.



The Lightnings took centre stage at a number of air shows around the UK, principally the Royal International Air Tattoo at RAF Fairford in Gloucestershire and the Farnborough International Airshow.

Speaking on July 1, the date of the carrier fly-past, the head of the Fleet Air Arm, Rear Admiral Keith Blount, said:

"Today marks a significant milestone in the nation's return to aircraft carrier aviation and carrier strike.

"Both ships have been designed from the keel up to operate with the F-35B and the RAF and Royal Navy are working ever closer to see fixed-wing aircraft once more operating from Royal Navy aircraft carriers.

"I feel very proud to be part of it."

Each carrier will provide over four acres of sovereign territory which can be deployed around the world, travelling at upwards of 500 nautical miles a day.



Both ships are capable of carrying up to 36 Lightning IIs.

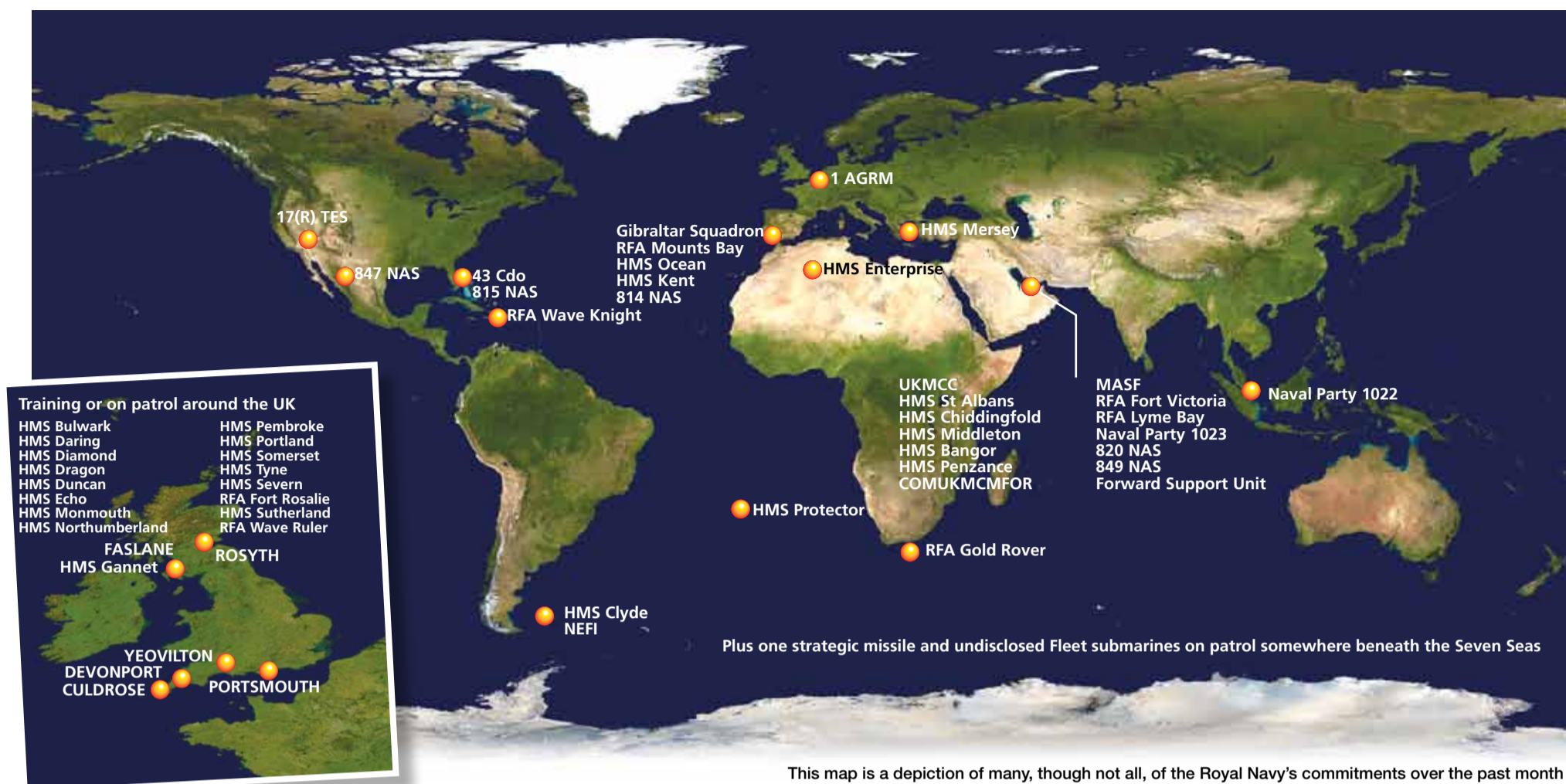
Air Cdre Harv Smyth, Lightning Force Commander, said: "The arrival of Lightning in the UK is an important step towards our delivery of operational capability with the UK's first ever stealth fighter aircraft.

"Operating from land bases or our new aircraft carriers, the F-35B Lightning will provide 'next generation' advanced sensor capabilities which, when combined with its low observable, 'stealthy' design, allow the pilot to see more, know more and act faster than the enemy.

"Our Lightning Force is developing very quickly and we are well prepared for the arrival of our first operational squadron at RAF Marham in 2018."







This map is a depiction of many, though not all, of the Royal Navy's commitments over the past month

THE future of the Royal Navy got a whole lot closer this month with the arrival in the UK of the **F-35B** Lightning II jet (see pages 2-3).

Three of the stealth strike fighters, which will operate from the Royal Navy's two new aircraft carriers, made the journey from the USA to show the public what the fifth generation aircraft are capable of.

As well as the future, the past and present of the Fleet Air Arm were on display as **RNAS Yeovilton** held its annual air day (see pages 18-19). More than 35,000 spectators witnessed Wildcat and Lynx helicopters, the Fly Navy Heritage Trust's iconic Sea Vixen and displays from the French Navy Rafale and Jordanian Falcons.

Submarine hunting was the task of personnel from **814 NAS** as they took part in Exercise Deep Blue 2 in the Western Mediterranean (see pages 22-23). Working with **HMS Ocean** and **Kent**, the Merlin pilots were developing tactics to protect the HMS Queen Elizabeth carrier battle group.

We also take a glimpse into the life of the Royal Navy's Fleet Ready Escort (see page 15) as **HMS Somerset** notched up her tenth activation earlier this summer.

The Royal Marines have been on their travels, with **43 Commando Fleet Protection Group** joining Lynx fliers from **815 NAS** in northern Florida for Exercise Iron Eagle (see page 21). The RN units worked with the US Coast Guard to hone their counter-narcotics operations.

Also in the USA were Junglie squadron **847** as they took their Wildcats to Arizona to conduct vital desert training (see centre pages). Marine Corps Air Station Yuma was the destination for 847 during Exercise Wildcat Raider.

Meanwhile men from **1 Assault Group Royal Marines** took their landing craft and assault boats to Holland for Exercise Green Tulip (see page 14) to train men to lead the amphibious attacks of the future.

Closer to home, on the English-Scottish border, artillery batteries from **29 Commando Regiment Royal Artillery** joined Dutch Marines and the Army's 1st Regiment Royal Horse Artillery for Exercise Green Cannon (see page 14). Army Reservists from 103rd Regiment RA and Hawk jets from RAF 100 Squadron also took part in the exercise, which ended with a combat scenario to fully test 3 Commando Brigade's Strike Group.

There were tears of joy as **HMS Defender** and **HMS Iron Duke** returned home to the UK following their respective deployments (see page 6). Defender spent nine months away, primarily supporting US and French carrier strike groups in the Gulf, while Iron Duke was away for six months with NATO in Northern Europe.

Back to the high fliers and star sailors from the **Portsmouth Flotilla**, who have been rewarded (see page 20) for outstanding achievements by the Armed Forces Minister.

Also in Portsmouth, journalists joined military and civilian staff at Navy Command HQ to glimpse the future of warfare in the air, on the surface and underwater (see page 9) ahead of **Unmanned Warrior** in the autumn.

The Royal Navy has welcomed the first civilian engineers to sign up for a new direct entry scheme (see page 11) that recognises the common skills possessed by civilian and military engineers at senior rate level.

Communities throughout the UK saluted the work of the Armed Forces (see pages 16-17) during the eighth **Armed Forces Day**.

Finally, **HMS Pembroke** took a starring role (see page 7) as she met up with the cruise liner Queen Elizabeth off Sweden and on the Mersey, and then welcomed more than 20 corgis (the Queen's a big fan) onboard to mark Her Majesty's 90th birthday.

Echo to the rescue



A ROYAL Navy warship assisted a yacht that became stranded in strong winds just off the South Coast.

Plymouth-based survey vessel HMS Echo worked with the RNLI and Solent Coastguard station to come to the aid of a yacht, which was unable to make headway in strong winds.

Echo was conducting survey operations in the western English Channel when it overheard a distress call from the struggling sailor to Solent Coastguard.

With the yacht unable to get a clear message out, due to being battered by 40 knot squalls whilst attempting to cross Lyme Bay, HMS Echo followed up the call by passing vital information to the coastguard, who quickly activated the RNLI.

Making her way towards the yacht, Echo's crew continued to provide information to help the RNLI inshore lifeboat from Teignmouth to locate the vessel quickly. As the RNLI took the yacht under tow the warship provided a lee,

shielding the vessels from the harsh winds, as she escorted them back to Teignmouth.

The trio were then joined by the offshore lifeboat from Exmouth, which offered further reassurance as the group headed towards land.

Echo's Operations Officer, Lt Cdr Tom Becker, 36, who was officer of the watch at the time of the incident and first to hear the distress call, said: "It was too small a yacht in too strong a wind."

"The sea is a dangerous place to operate. As the Royal Navy, one of our core roles is to save lives at sea when necessary. Thankfully this proved to be a relatively minor incident but it could have been much worse."

"I am glad that we were able to assist and work closely together with the RNLI and Her Majesty's Coastguard."

Having guided the lifeboat and her tow into calmer inshore waters, Echo parted company and headed back out to sea to continue with her surveying mission along the South Coast.



● The ship's company of HMS Dragon on parade for the ceremony
Picture: LPhoto Sean Gascoigne

Breathing new fire into Dragon

TYPE 45 destroyer HMS Dragon has returned to the front line.

The warship has been out of action for a year while she underwent a major upgrade.

Dragon was rededicated in a ceremony at Portsmouth Naval Base in front of hundreds of guests, including friends and families and members of the ship's affiliate organisations.

Improvements to the ship – carried out by BAE Systems – have included upgrades to weapons, IT, communications and marine engineering systems. Her huge rudders have also been overhauled.

Dragon also has a fresh coat of paint and the popular 12ft high decorative red Welsh dragons on her bow have been given a facelift.

Two Typhoon aircraft from the ship's

affiliate RAF unit – 11 Squadron – performed a flypast at the ceremony.

Principal guest was Susie Boissier – the ship's sponsor who launched the vessel on the Clyde in 2008.

Commanding Officer Capt Craig Wood said: "My sailors and I are rightfully proud of her return to the fleet and welcomed the opportunity to celebrate this fantastic occasion with Dragon's sponsor, our families and friends."

The hour-long event was rounded off in traditional style when Mrs Boissier cut a special cake with a sword with the youngest member of the ship's company – 18-year-old Able Seaman Nathan Levers.

Dragon will now undergo a series of intensive sea trials in UK waters to prepare for her third overseas deployment.

Albion nearing return

THE Royal Navy amphibious command ship HMS Albion has reached a milestone in her major refit in Plymouth.

With the external hull work complete, the ship has now been refloated and is alongside in a basin. The focus is now on ship's staff moving onboard early next year before starting sea trials.

It took 18 hours for a team of 40 people of HMS Albion's combined crew of Royal Navy, full time Royal Navy reservists and Babcock engineers to move the 20,000-tonne ship into a basin.

Commander Mark Jones, head of Albion's weapons engineering, said: "This has been a major milestone in HMS Albion's regeneration and confirmation of her ship's company and Babcock's determination to complete the delivery of a multi-million pound complex refit package in 2017."

The project involves the MOD's Defence Equipment and Support organisation and MOD industrial partner Babcock with a 4,000-strong refit work force.

More than one million man-hours of work are planned to ready the ship for her next period of operations following extensive trials of all the ship's systems at sea and training of the crew.

The work includes more than 110 alterations and additions to prepare for operations. She will have a new combat system with the addition of a Phalanx gun, Artisan radar and a new command system. The fire detection system will be updated and a fresh water cooling system added to the propulsion system.



Living on the line...

PETTY Officer Aircrewman Chris Roadley returns to his Merlin from 824 NAS after being winched up from the deck of HMS Hurworth.

The anti-submarine helicopter teamed up with the Hunt-class mine countermeasures ship for a series of exercises in the English Channel.

The MCMV Fleet provide state-of-the-art mine warfare expertise to the Royal Navy and its NATO allies, playing a vital part in the worldwide MCMV operations from the Middle East to the North Atlantic.

But before the Portsmouth-based ship and her crew can deploy, the ship's company must be tested.

HMS Hurworth is currently undergoing Operational Sea Training with Flag Officer Sea Training.

The capabilities of the Hunt class have been significantly enhanced by the installation of Type 2193 sonar and the NAUTIS 3 command system.

The performance of Sonar 2193 exceeds that of any other mine-hunting sonar in service across the world today and is capable of detecting and classifying an object the size of a football at a distance of up to 1,000 metres.

PICTURE: PO(Phot) Paul A'Barrow



WW1 rating's grave rededicated Known unto God

WATCHED by 89-year-old Joan Loftus, crew from HMS Hurworth stand around the Union Flag as the grave of her uncle is rededicated.

For nearly a century, the last resting place of AB Haco Dobson, a 22-year-old junior rating aboard destroyer HMS Tornado, was unknown.

Two days before Christmas 1917 Haco's ship was one of four destroyers patrolling off the Dutch coast when they ran into a German minefield.

In the ensuing chaos three ships sank – Torrent, Surprise and finally Tornado, which detonated two mines as she tried to escape the field; only one man out of more than 80 aboard survived.

Just HMS Radiant succeeded in returning to base unharmed.

Three months later the body of one H Dobson 3161 was washed up at Zandvoort – 20 miles west of Amsterdam – and buried in the local cemetery.

After the conflict, the then Imperial War Graves Commission decided to re-bury Britain's Great War dead in a handful of cemeteries. An administrative error listed Haco as 'W E Dobson 3161' – who didn't exist, and so the headstone erected over his grave at Noordwijk, 25 miles southwest of the Dutch capital, was marked: "British seaman of the

Great War. Known unto God."

But recent research by Dutch historian Mark Siljmans, the Commonwealth War Graves Commission and the MOD's Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre succeeded in correcting the error and solving the 99-year mystery of Haco's last resting place.

His niece Joan, great-nephew Kieran, great-niece Deidre and great-great-nephew Ronan made the trip to the Netherlands, with crew from minehunter HMS Hurworth, paying a visit to Holland, and representatives from the British Embassy.

"It was a very special day – we weren't expecting such a wonderful service. We are all so proud of Haco," said Mrs Loftus.

Her uncle hailed from Penrith originally, grew up in Liverpool and worked in a paper mill in Darwen in Lancashire before joining the Navy in 1916.

For Mr Siljmans, who'd spent several years studying local archives to help correctly identify Haco Dobson and had been invited to the CWGC's workshops in Beaurains in France to see the new gravestone carved, the rededication was a day of satisfaction and sadness.

"One unknown sailor less," he said. "It's a pity that his mother never knew."



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MPs vote to replace Trident submarines

THE House of Commons has backed the renewal of the UK's Trident nuclear weapons system. The MPs' vote – carried by 472 to 117 – approves the manufacture of four replacement submarines at a current estimated cost of £31bn.

Defence Secretary Michael Fallon said: "We have voted to protect our nation from the most serious threats we may face in the 2030s, 2040s and 2050s."

The UK has four Vanguard-class submarines that each carry up to eight Trident missiles. The missiles can be fitted with a number of warheads, which can be directed at different targets. The Trident fleet is based at HMNB Clyde, in Faslane, Scotland.

The continuous at sea deterrent has provided the UK's ultimate security insurance policy every day for the last 46 years.

Earlier this year Mr Fallon announced funding of £642m for the Successor submarine programme.

The investment includes £225m for new facilities at BAE Systems at Barrow-in-Furness, where the submarines will be assembled.

The funding will also see significant investment in the UK/US collaboration for the Common Missile Compartment and around £200m for the submarine's power plant, including long-lead items.

This confirmed the announcement made in last year's Strategic Defence and Security Review.

■ Wirral is the destination for the Navy's unwanted nuclear submarines as the MOD decided a Cheshire firm should store the reactor sections for the next quarter of a century.

Capenhurst Nuclear Services in the namesake village near Ellesmere Port has been selected to deal with the reactor pressure vessels from 19 decommissioned boats spanning more than half a century of Silent Service operations.

The firm will provide safe storage for the pressure vessels – thick steel containers which held nuclear fuel when the reactors operated – and which are classified as intermediate level nuclear waste until the government's own disposal facility is ready some time after 2040.

The decommissioned boats are currently stored afloat in Rosyth and Devonport, from the very first nuclear submarine Dreadnought through to the most-recently-retired Trafalgar-class boat, HMS Tireless.

Eight more submarines – the remaining T-boats, plus all four Vanguard-class deterrent boats – are due to be decommissioned over the next ten to 15 years; they are covered by the project.

Mersey off to Aegean

RFA Wave Knight has taken over from HMS Mersey on Caribbean patrol duties.

Mersey, which spent six months in the region, largely on drug-busting duties, has been sent to the Aegean to support NATO activity to counter migration.

The patrol ship also flew the flag for the UK in the Americas and Caribbean. Wave Knight, 18 times larger than Mersey, will also be able to provide humanitarian aid should communities be stricken by natural disaster (the hurricane season has now begun).

Cheers and tears as warships return home



● ET(WE) Rowan Chappell is reunited with nephew Rhys and girlfriend Keri Allen; Emily Anderson waits for her dad; PO Damon Clark plants a kiss on son Oliver

Hey there, Georgy girl

Pictures: LPhoto Kyle Heller and LPhoto Dan Rosenbaum

YOUNG Georgina Higham is delighted to see her dad as his ship HMS Defender returned to Portsmouth following a nine-month deployment.

Dad Steve is the Type 45's CO and during her 263 days away, Defender visited 19 ports in 11 countries.

Georgina's joy was replicated across the quayside as loved ones turned out to welcome the crew home.

"As captain, I could not be prouder of the men and women who have worked alongside me over the last 18 months and particularly over the course of this deployment," said Cdr Higham.

"Every sailor, Royal Marine, airman and soldier who has served in Defender has been bold, confident and extraordinary, confident that what we have done here has made a difference and that we have directly contributed to the national security of the UK."

Defender participated in two major international maritime exercises, represented the UK at the International Indian Fleet review, and conducted numerous boarding operations resulting in one major drugs bust, while carrying out her primary role providing air command and control support to US and French carrier strike groups in the Gulf.

The Type 45 destroyer intercepted a suspect fishing dhow off the south coast of Oman. After the dhow was secured by a Royal Marines boarding team with the support of HMS Defender's Lynx helicopter, a Navy search team seized over a tonne of hashish being trafficked across the Indian Ocean.

The ship has travelled 47,538 nautical miles, the equivalent of going more than twice around the world. To cover this distance, she has used 10,551,000 litres of fuel, enough to fill 4.2 Olympic-size swimming pools.

It's not just the ship that required fuelling. During the deployment the 248 sailors on board have consumed 75,600 eggs, 19,000 kg of potatoes, or the equivalent of 16 Mini Coopers, and 54,720 sausages weighing 3,420 kg, which would cover three miles if laid end to end.

Naval Airman Ayla Mair said: "The deployment has been challenging and really pushed the boundaries of my expectations but, it has been an incredibly rewarding experience."

As Defender returned to Portsmouth, her Lynx flight touched down at RNAS Yeovilton.

CO of 815 NAS Cdr Phil Richardson, who welcomed home 239 Flight, said: "These are magic moments, they've had a fantastic deployment."

Greeting PO Damon Clark was wife Natalie and sons Joshua, two, and 11-months-old Oliver.

"I'm really looking forward to having him home, we have an adventure planned, finding bugs in the woods with our little boys; there will be no peace," said Natalie.

FOUR years and two months after last seeing the shores of this sceptred isle, support ship RFA Cardigan Bay is back in UK waters after completing her lengthy Gulf mission.

The ship proved crucial to mine warfare operations in the Middle East – not just by the Royal Navy's four minehunters in the region, but by US counterparts based in Bahrain and international dive teams.

Although built to provide support for amphibious landings by the Royal Marines, the ship has proved equally adept as a 'mother ship' to minehunters – providing food, fuel, water, ammunition, and accommodation and acting as their floating headquarters, with a mine warfare battle staff aboard choreographing the ships' actions.

At times she's also served as a launchpad for ScanEagle eye-in-the-sky drones monitoring suspicious activity, and, with the addition of a temporary hangar on her flight deck, new Wildcat helicopters getting used to operating in the demanding Gulf climate.

Over this lengthy deployment, the ship has used (or delivered) more than 21,193 tonnes of fuel – enough to fill 353,217 average family cars... allowing them to collectively drive 2.12 million miles (a lot... but still only 1/24 of the distance to Mars).

In addition, the ship's company alone has polished off in excess of over 103,000 sausages and 282,000 eggs during the past 50 months.

"Fifty months deployed is an impressive statistic – more so because the ship has not missed one operational commitment or task in all that time," said Cardigan Bay's proud CO Capt Chris Clarke.

The ship will now undergo an extensive overhaul while her sister RFA Lyme Bay takes her place in the Gulf.

LOVED ones welcomed back personnel from HMS Iron Duke following a six-month deployment with NATO in Northern Europe.

Clocking up more than 22,500 nautical miles, in her 180 days away, the Type 23 frigate worked alongside NATO allies as part of the Standing NATO Maritime Group 1 – tasked with providing continuous maritime capability in peacetime and periods of crisis and conflict.

The ship had a deployment of two halves, with the first spent in the extreme cold and rough seas off Norway and the second in the calm seas of the Baltic.

Through war-fighting exercises, transits and patrols through these regions, the ship visited 19 ports in ten different countries.

Along the way the 185 ship's company has taken part in a number of major NATO exercises including Cold Response, Joint Warrior and Baltops 16.

Baltops is one of the largest and most comprehensive exercises run by NATO, with 4,000 personnel from 16 nations taking part along with more than 40 ships, submarines and over 60 aircraft.

The annual exercise, which is



● WO1 Andy Patton is welcomed home by his daughters Ella and Scarlett and wife Alison

now in its 44th year, is intended to hone the ability of allied and partner nations to work alongside each other.

HMS Iron Duke took on the lead role in a task group of enemy forces providing participants a realistic and complex threat to counter as part of the exercise.

Her Commanding Officer, Cdr Ben Aldous, said: "This has

been an enormously successful deployment for Iron Duke. My ship's company has earned themselves an outstanding reputation among our NATO allies.

"I am very proud of what each and every one of my sailors has achieved over the last six months and they can look forward to some well-deserved time at home."

Ban lifted on women in combat roles

WOMEN are to be allowed to serve on the front line in ground close combat roles for the first time.

Chief of the General Staff Gen Sir Nick Carter recommended the move, which was supported by the other Service chiefs, and accepted by then Prime Minister David Cameron.

Defence Secretary Michael Fallon said: "I have always wanted roles in our Armed Forces to be determined by ability, not gender."

"Women have already given exemplary service in recent conflicts, working in a variety of highly specialised and vital roles."

"By opening all combat roles to women, we will continue to build on these successes and improve the operational capability of our military."

The decision follows extensive research which looked into three key areas of potential risk to women on the front line – musculoskeletal injury, psychological issues and impaired reproductive health.

As a result of this 'Interim Health Report', combat roles will be opened to women in a phased approach over the next three years – including roles in the Royal Marines General Service.

This will begin by allowing women to serve in all roles within certain units of the Royal Armoured Corps from November.

This will be reviewed after six months before being expanded to other units of the RAC.

Given the current recruiting timelines, the first women might start Royal Marines training in late 2018, but it is more likely to be from January 2019.

The Navy Board and the Commandant General Royal Marines were involved throughout the consultation process and have also welcomed the decision.

But they have also made it clear that the Royal Marines Commando standard remains unchanged – and anyone who does not meet that standard will not serve in the Royal Marines.

The full Interim Health Report is available under 'Publications' on www.gov.uk

Greeting Queen and corgis

QUEEN Elizabeth and corgis – not an unfamiliar concept...

Only the Queen Elizabeth in this case was Cunard's luxurious liner, and the corgis were a couple of dozen dogs who brought their owners along with them.

And the common thread? That would be minehunter HMS Pembroke.

The Hunt-class ship was on Baltops which, not surprisingly, took place in the Baltic.

While she was there, Pembroke's bridge team spotted the 90,000-tonne cruise liner Queen Elizabeth off the Swedish island of Öland.

Pembroke briefly detached from her partner ships in NATO's Mine Counter-measures Group 1, and the two ships exchanged formalities during a sail-past (right).

"In the past few days we've been lucky enough to see some really fantastic ships and aircraft, both from the Royal Navy and from our NATO allies," said AB(D) Callum O'Connor.

"Getting to see the Queen Elizabeth just around the time of Her Majesty's official 90th birthday was the icing on the cake."

It was a welcome break from an intensive spell of what the ship does best – locate and dispose of explosive devices.

In this iteration of Baltops Pembroke helped neutralise 18 pieces of wartime ordnance, working as part of a task group consisting of 14 NATO and partner nations (Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Sweden and the United States being the others).

The group scoured 54 square nautical miles of seabed off Lithuania, scanning and identifying 912 objects in an ongoing programme to clear a threat from busy sea lanes.

Of those, 18 turned out to be explosive ordnance (15 mines and three torpedoes), amongst the other items were parts from two rockets and three shipwrecks.

During the exercise HMS Pembroke used her sonar to locate a Russian World War 1 mine



in the approaches to Klaipeda harbour, then deployed a remote underwater vehicle to dive down to identify the object before Royal Navy divers went in to get rid of the 100-year-old weapon.

The encounter between liner and warship off Öland was a curtain-raiser to a more formal meeting a month or so later, when Pembroke had the honour of escorting the Cunarder into port when she arrived in Liverpool.

So that's the Queen – what about the corgis?

It is widely known that the Queen is a big fan of corgis – and her favoured breed is the Pembroke variety (you can see where this is going...)

To mark the Queen's 90th birthday, a group from the Welsh Corgi League (of which the Queen is the patron) arranged to meet up on the jetty at Milford Haven when the ship visited its affiliated county.

More than 20 dogs duly turned up, and their owners enjoyed a tour of the ship (there is no word as to the corgis' opinion).

An account will appear in the summer edition of the League's newsletter *Our Corgi World*.

"We were all so pleased to have the dogs on board," said Sub Lt Jo Peacock.

"It is such a unique thing to do, and it helps us have a closer tie with our affiliated county of Pembrokeshire."

Members of the ship's company were on duty at events in Pembroke, Pembroke Dock and Milford Haven, while the ship was open to visitors for two days during her time alongside.



● Sub Lt Jo Peacock of HMS Pembroke with one of the visitors from the Welsh Corgi League in Milford Haven

Pictures: CPO Andrew Styles (HMS Pembroke WEO)



West (Country) Virginia

IT was not a great day for the spotters when USS Virginia made her way into Devonport.

The subject matter herself was well worth a look, but the swirling mist made a clear look at the submarine, shepherded by tugs (photographed above by L(Phot) Baz Wheeler), somewhat problematic.

Virginia, on her first visit to Plymouth, is the lead boat of her class of technologically-advanced attack submarines.

Commanded by Cdr Steven Antcliff USN, she has a crew of 134, 13 of them officers.

Launched in August 2003 and commissioned the following year, she was the first submarine to be entirely designed on a computer.

The class have a fly-by-wire ship control system that provides improved shallow-water

ship handling, making it suitable for littoral tasks.

In a similar move to the British Astute-class boats, traditional periscopes have been supplanted by photonics masts, using electronic systems and cameras to gather data and imagery.

This has allowed American designers to move the ship's control room one deck down, away from the hull's curvature, affording it more room and an improved layout that provides the commanding officer with better awareness.

Virginia is one of the next-generation attack submarine in the US Navy – a dozen have been commissioned to date, and they will replace Los Angeles-class submarines as they retire.

USS Virginia is conducting a routine deployment in the US 6th Fleet area of operations.

Royal presentation for newest submariners

A GROUP of 14 newly-qualified submariners were presented with their prized Dolphins by a royal visitor on board HMS Artful.

The Duke of Cambridge, in his role as Commodore-in-Chief Submarines was paying his first visit to the boat as she returned from a successful trial period in the western Atlantic (right).

His visit also presented the first chance for Prince William to experience a dive in an Astute-class submarine.

To qualify as a submariner, sailors must demonstrate a detailed and instinctive knowledge of more than 30 complex engineering systems, with classroom and sea-based assessments followed by a rigorous exam board.

The Dolphins presentation took place in the 'bomb shop', where Artful's torpedoes and Tomahawk Land Attack Missiles (TLAM) are stored.

The Duke's tour of the boat spanned the forward escape compartment to the manoeuvring room where the nuclear reactor plant and electrical systems are managed.

Along the way he met members of the crew in the galley, the control room and in their bunk spaces.



Picture: L(phot) Ben Shread



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Shaping the future

THINK small to think big.

Journalists joined military and civilian staff at Navy Command Headquarters in Portsmouth to glimpse the future of warfare in the air, on the surface and underwater, and to see how the Royal Navy is encouraging the development of new technology and techniques.

A task group in miniature was displayed in the atrium of Leach Building, while out in the shadow of harbour training ship HMS Bristol was a tiny aircraft carrier – the sort you can tow on a trailer behind a family car.

This was a chance for key Royal Navy and Civil Service personnel to be brought up-to-date with the staggering possibilities that technology has opened up, much of it taking the man or woman out of the danger zone.

Officially opened by Rear Admiral Paul Bennett (Assistant Chief of Naval Staff – Capability), the ‘foyer day’ featured more than 25 firms and organisations, with a variety of aircraft, boats and submersibles to attract the curious.

There were systems that you could deploy from a small boat which will search for and destroy mines.

There were craft that you

could drop over the side of a ship, leaving them to loiter mid-ocean for weeks or months, gathering data from their surroundings and beaming the information back to base.

There was a scale model of an artificial acoustic target – the real thing is hardly massive at 5.5 metres – that mimics the size and characteristics of submarines.

So rather than borrow a full-sized boat with a crew to hone your anti-submarine skills, you could send this torpedo-sized doppelganger out and it will ‘sound’ (on sonar) and behave like a submarine – just programme in the acoustic profile and off it goes.

You can even get it to reproduce the sound of heads being flushed on the target boat – such attention to detail in a training aid is admirable.

One strong theme was that of mastering the elements – getting the most out of good kit and good people by gaining a detailed knowledge of the operating environment.

As one young Naval officer

said, imagine a frigate or a destroyer as a rough table; perfectly serviceable and will do the job, but a deeper understanding of the sea and sky around it adds a veneer for a better result.

And environmental concerns were also to the fore; many devices used little or no fuel, and at least one manufacturer proudly drew attention to the ‘marine mammal mitigation’ aspect of its product.

Down on the Whale Island waterfront were a couple of boats that are test-beds for unmanned and associated systems, and are capable units in their own right.

One – BAE Systems’ Pacific 950 Jekyll – was typical of the wow factor on display.

With a range of over 100 miles and speeds of some 50 knots, the rigid inflatable boat bristles with cameras, can operate a towed array and ‘talks’ directly to the mother ship.

It can be programmed to operate alone in poor conditions (no operator to get cold, tired,

wet or seasick), could patrol a harbour or gas rig, or be deployed as part of a forward picket line.

It has sophisticated software that allows it to follow a pre-determined navigation track while employing collision-avoidance algorithms, and can also be used as a conventional manned craft.

And perched on the RIB, on just about the smallest flight-deck imaginable – roughly the size of a dining table – was an aircraft; a Chemring Roke Autoland UAV (unmanned aerial vehicle; also widely referred to as a drone) which uses an onboard camera to guide itself down onto this tiny aircraft carrier.

On nearby sports pitches another drone was put through its paces, lifting small payloads (and inadvertently employing a niche stealth technology – the sound of the rotors almost perfectly mimicked the sound of a nearby lawnmower...)

Come the autumn the focus of activity moves along the South Coast, and to Wales and Scotland, allowing firms to demonstrate their systems in less-benign conditions during Unmanned Warrior, held in conjunction with the regular Exercise Joint Warrior.



● Rear Admiral Paul Bennett takes closer look at an unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) at the Navy Command HQ foyer day
Picture: LA(Phot) Guy Pool

Raleigh hosts students

A GROUP of 32 young people from Devon, Cornwall and further afield visited HMS Raleigh over a fortnight for work experience placements.

The Royal Navy training base in Torpoint welcomed students aged between 14 and 18 for a week-long programme.

Open to young people who have an interest in joining the Armed Forces, the programme was designed to give students a taste of the opportunities available, the training and the chance to learn new skills.

Highlights of the week included the opportunity to experience some of the training undertaken by new recruits.

That meant getting out onto the river, testing their marksmanship in the computerised indoor training range and practical challenges such as marching and PT.

The programme also included a visit to the RN Submarine School and a look round submarine HMS Courageous in Devonport, while at the Defence Maritime Logistics School, the students were given an understanding of the contribution writers, chefs, stewards and supply chain ratings make to a warship’s effectiveness.

After completing a challenge to transfer stores from the UK to Bahrain, 15-year-old Annabell Colwill, said: “I’d like to join the Navy. I think I’ll take away that teamwork is a big part of being in the Navy. Overall I think it’s made me want to join more.”

HMS Raleigh’s Work Experience Officer, WO1 Paul Stevenson, said: “HMS Raleigh has been offering work experience placements for a number of years now.

“We aim to show the young people what it’s like to be part of the military. They march as a platoon around the establishment and we encourage those who are members of the Cadet Forces to wear their uniforms.

“We hope that they all take something away from the experience; whether that’s something that helps in their future career within the Armed Forces or something they take to a civilian role.”



● The Prince of Wales talks to sailors on board the Prince of Wales in Rosyth
Picture: LA(Phot) Pepe Hogan, FRPU North

Carrier finished by royal assent

IT FELL to the Prince of Wales to finish the ship which bears his name as he paid his first visit to the new carrier in Rosyth.

The Prince – known as the Duke of Rothesay when he’s in Scotland – gave the signal for the last block of the 65,000-tonne warship to be lowered into position.

The 43-strong crew of HMS Prince of Wales stood proudly on the flight deck to see the 570-tonne segment, Sponson 11, moved into position by the enormous Goliath crane which dominates the north bank of the Forth.

The carrier is six times longer and almost 150 times heavier than the prince’s sole command during his naval career, minesweeper HMS Bronington.

“I feel even more proud of everyone who has contributed to the building of HMS Prince of Wales,” Prince Charles told the sailors and shipwrights.

“Nothing could have given me greater pleasure than to be with you here today.”

Among the sailors the prince met was 23-year-old logistician AB Iain Harris, who said: “It is a fantastic honour to be part of the royal visit today and to actually meet the Prince of Wales.

“Today marks a really proud

moment in my Naval career and one I will definitely remember.”

While the installation of the sponson – part of the flight deck which protrudes beyond the hull – means the carrier is largely complete externally, a massive amount of effort is required to prepare the ship for her naming ceremony (in lieu of a traditional launch) next spring.

Ian Booth, Managing Director of the Aircraft Carrier Alliance, formed to build the two carriers, said it was a moment of celebration tinged with a little sadness.

“It marks the end of eight years of manufacturing for the Queen Elizabeth class in six yards across the UK,” he said.

“I know that I speak on behalf of every one of the 10,000 plus workers who have contributed to the design and build of the Queen Elizabeth-class carriers that we are honoured to have the Duke of Rothesay here to mark this important occasion.”

For the carrier’s recently-appointed senior officer Capt Ian Groom, the focus “now moves to commissioning the ship and my team will continue to work with their industry partners to bring her to life ahead of sea trials in 2018.”

700X tests new unmanned system

700X NAVAL Air Squadron have taken delivery of their first Commercial off the Shelf (COTS) mini unmanned aerial system (UAS) – two quad copters.

With the proliferation of such systems in the commercial market, and the fact they present a very cheap but able ‘eye in the sky’ capability, it is felt that they may prove useful in the day-to-day business of the Royal Navy.

Possible tasks for the aircraft, that would fit into a small suitcase, include the inspection of ship

superstructures, surveys of buildings, the navigation of ice fields and estuaries, security operations and the monitoring of boarding operations.

Step in 700X NAS, based at RN Air Station Culdrose in Cornwall, who are currently classifying and testing a range of systems while developing a training course for units wishing to use these systems.

As a consequence of their activities, the unit is becoming the centre of excellence in this rapidly-evolving area.

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Enginemen: one rank below carpenters

THE evolution from sail to steam was a pivotal period in the history of the Royal Navy – but it brought with it some problems.

Not the least of them was how the Navy should deal with engineers (or enginemen, as they were originally known).

These pioneers of iron and steam were an anomaly.

They belonged to neither the military or civilian branches of the Service, and as such were not steeped in the harsh discipline and unbending tradition of the Navy.

As the Navy needed to find experienced men quickly to support the rapidly-expanding steam Navy, they recruited civilians directly from the engine works and forges.

But it was said that they constituted a law unto themselves in matters of discipline (and that when they were recruited they were generally found “hanging round under a street lamp”).

Something had to be done to bring them into the fold – and that something was an Order in Council, which on July 19 1837 effectively brought the Engineering Branch into being.

That Order specified that engineers should take their place in the natural order of things – in this instance, one rank below that of carpenters.

And the tumultuous times of the early Victorian era also meant a pragmatic approach had to be taken – because of the demand for engineers, the next Order in Council, within 12 months, awarded engineers a 30 per cent pay rise.

Next year the branch will celebrate its 180th anniversary, but a dress rehearsal was planned by some for this year’s anniversary, as *Navy News* went to press.

Devonport will see a Standeasy tea and birthday cake at a number of work locations ashore and afloat, and the Devon engineers were hoping for a similar response across the Service

Civilian engineers join up

CIVILIAN firms have always coveted well-trained, disciplined Royal Navy engineers.

But there is no reason why that should be a one-way street – which is why a new route has been opened up into the world of marine engineering in the Senior Service.

The Royal Navy is testing a lateral entry scheme that recognises the common skills possessed by civilian and military engineers at senior rate level.

DE POET (ME) Matt Goodman is one of the first civilian engineers to sign up for the Direct Entry Petty Officer Technician scheme – hence the ‘DE’ prefix to his rank.

He is in a programme that will add a Naval dimension to the engineering skills and knowledge he developed in a previous career.

“I was an electrician/engineer on the high-voltage side of maintenance and repairs of rigs in the international oil and gas industry,” said Matt, 36.

“I worked in the Middle East – Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, the Emirates – then on to Australia and the jungle of Papua New Guinea, then I went to Algeria in North Africa.

“It was quite a challenge sometimes; you can apply some of that to parts of the Navy. I understand some of what matelots go through.”

Living away from home for prolonged periods and worldwide travel also chime in with life in a blue suit.

But a downturn in the industry prompted Matt to think about the future – and that led him to an Armed Forces Career Office.

“There was a CPO there who said: ‘I might have something for you...’

“I came back the next day and it just felt right. I was interested.

“Within 24 hours I had made my choice.”

That set in motion a chain of events that is being tweaked into a well-grooved process as it matures.

Each candidate is invited to an assessment centre at HMS Sultan in Gosport, where they undergo a bespoke programme using the facilities at the Admiralty

Interview Board (AIB).

“There is some practical leadership, a written engineering assessment, a board to explore the candidates’ personal traits and a technical interview where two WOs sit and talk and understand what the candidates know, and make a technical assessment,” said WO1 Darren ‘Judge’ Duery, a member of the team helping the DET initiative.

“The WOs will assess whether they have compatible skills – and whether they will survive in a marine engineering department.”

Candidates must have already done three years within the field of engineering, have an HNC or above, and have been in charge of a minimum of two technicians.

The pilot scheme recruits to the marine engineering specialisation as it was felt that was where civilian and military skills were most closely aligned.

If it proves successful, other specialisations and branches, such as weapon engineering, could set up similar schemes.

Successful individuals will be made an offer, and if that is taken up they will spend time at HMS Raleigh, depending on previous military experience.

Matt did the entire ten-week New Entry course.

“I was a typical rig worker/roughneck, and I had no military background,” said Matt.

“At Raleigh I was in a room with a bunch of 18-year-olds and it was a challenge, but I got through.

“Some of them are friends now and we keep in touch.

“It also taught me skills on top of the leadership I had before, and it can open your mind up to different ideas.

“You learn about the ethos of the Royal Navy and the six core values.”

Those with a previous military career will spend days rather than weeks at Raleigh.

“They don’t have to do the Raleigh militarisation – we just have to stop them saluting every three seconds if they learned drill in the Army...” said WO Duery.

“They have the military skills and ethos. They might have done 20 years in the Army, and you do



● DE POET (ME) Matt Goodman works on an engineering task on board Type 45 destroyer HMS Diamond, under the watchful eye of mentor PO Philip Bowden
Picture: L(Phot) Sean Gascoigne

not lose that in two or three years.”

After Raleigh the Direct Entry PO Technicians undertake further Service training such as sea survival, then head to Sultan for six more weeks of technical, management and administration training.

They then go to sea for up to nine months, shadowing experienced Naval engineers and further cementing their knowledge of Royal Navy life, gaining qualifications such as ME Officer of the Watch.

“At the end of their sea time they are assessed by the Flotillas and they drop their probationer tag – they are fully-fledged POETs and go back to Sultan for some additional qualifications,”

said WO Duery.

“So within 12 to 15 months you have taken a civilian off the street and they are able to work as a POET.

“They will be expected to perform exactly the same as anyone else; what these guys need is exposure of work.

“These guys have got a skill set; it is about the other skills we need to give them to enable them to walk onto a ship with the rank of petty officer and gain more experience.

“We cannot take a risk with these people so we reduce it as much as we can.

“We are fairly sure we get the right people with the right attitude.

“We are looking for diagnostic skills – can they work out what is wrong with the complex piece of equipment? Do they know what the equipment is doing?

“Do they know where the fault might be and can they then identify the component? “Invariably these guys come in with that knowledge and we are trying to teach these skills to our younger generations.

“They are high in engineering experience but low in maritime experience.”

Matt is currently on hold before joining Sultan, which has given him the opportunity to work in the Waterfront Engineering Support area of Portsmouth Naval Base with Naval engineers who have followed the more traditional entry route.

“I have very much enjoyed myself here and the exposure to military life, whether social or working with chiefs, officers or junior rates,” said Matt.

“I have been working with the ship’s crews on Type 45s and Type 23s, but for me, with my experience, it would have to be a 45.

“They talk about the Playstation generation, and what I see here can also be applied to the oil and gas industry.

“The older rigs correspond to the Type 23s, the newer rigs to Type 45 – they have touch screen technology, for example.”

WO Duery added: “It is very difficult for us to make a direct correlation between civilian and military careers in the qualities we are looking for on the technical side.

“You might have worked on a diesel in a truck, and it is not

how we manage a diesel in a Type 45 or Type 23 – but a diesel is a diesel.

“What Matt and people like him have is a wealth of knowledge on various equipment.

“He doesn’t know exactly what a Paxman Valenta diesel on a Type 23 does but he can reel off three other types of diesel he has worked with on rigs.

“That is the experience and quality that we are looking for, because they can adapt.

“And we know with this programme he is going to have to adapt quite quickly.”

On that point, Matt said: “I found matelot terms and technical expressions were different but I picked it up quite quickly.

“A water pump on a ship works in exactly the same way as a water pump on a rig – we can transfer all that knowledge across.

“Generators, pumps and the like might be laid out differently but it is the same principle and same idea and the same way of working.”

Matt has signed an 11-year contract, and the benefits – pension, dental care and the like – helped prompt him to sign on.

But other factors, such as job security, travel and the camaraderie of Navy life also played their part in his decision.

“I will probably extend if I can – it’s a job for life,” he said.

“The whole lifestyle appeals, compared with Civvy Street.

“Some of the younger ones have asked me about working in industry, and I said the grass isn’t greener on the other side.

“Oil and gas is a cut-throat industry which I probably wouldn’t go back to – and I did eight years in it.”

Despite initial concerns, WO Duery is now a convert to the scheme.

“I was relatively sceptical but there are a lot of positives about the people coming through the door,” he said.

“So to people on ships I would say: ‘Don’t worry about these guys coming – they bring a lot to the party.’

“And once they get through their probationary period the Navy opens up to them.

“They will have the same preferences and opportunities as any other petty officers.”

Speak to your local Armed Forces Careers Office for details about the DET scheme.

Expertise in reserve



THE Royal Naval Reserve Engineering Branch has completed its first deployment since its inauguration in June 2014.

The branch supplied six staff to Naval Party 1600 – a readiness force designed to be deployed at short notice to support deployed ships.

In this case the ship was HMS St Albans, and the location was Bahrain.

NP1600 normally draws on shore billets in Portsmouth and Devonport, but on this occasion the opportunity was offered to reservists.

The RNR contingent was fully integrated with their regular counterparts and carried out nearly half of the work that the party was

called upon to undertake, which ranged from diesel generator maintenance to setting to work a communications system.

In addition the team carried out an extended (24 to 48-hour) battle damage repair exercise with HMS Defender off Muscat, Oman, during the International Mine Countermeasures Exercise.

The team was based on RFA Cardigan Bay (pictured above) and was transferred to the destroyer at sea to undertake battle damage assessment and control.

Although this exercise was cut short for operational reasons, the reservists still proved their worth.

Lt Paul Holvey, who led the RNR

engineers, said: “This is a positive step for the newly-formed RNR Engineering Branch; we are not only supporting front-line ships on operations but we are also fully integrated with our regular Service colleagues.

“Having now tested the system to prove that we can fully deploy abroad we can be ready to support front-line capability in the future.”

The RNR Engineering Branch is recruiting from ex-regular engineers and is made up of all ranks, rates, and trades to deliver important support to warships when they are alongside, assisting all waterfront support agencies.

Support roles include hands-on engineering, including operation, diagnosis and repair.

FOUR British E-class submarines are tied up alongside their depot ship, recently returned from what was very nearly a re-run of Jutland – not three months after the tremendous battle.

For despite the popular view that the German battleships spent the rest of the Great War in the safety of their harbours and bases, the Kaiser's steel leviathans sortied into the North Sea three times between Jutland and *Der Tag* in November 1918 when the High Seas Fleet surrendered *en masse*.

The strategy employed was identical to Jutland: draw part of the Royal Navy into action on favourable terms and whittle away its superiority.

Two and half months after the German 'victory' Reinhard Scheer decided his bruised and battered High Seas Fleet was fit for action again (Britain's Grand Fleet had been ready within hours of Jutland).

At dusk on August 18 1916, 20 dreadnoughts accompanied by scouting forces and destroyers weighed anchor and headed west, destination: Sunderland.

Repeating a tactic from the first months of the war, Scheer hoped bombarding British coastal towns would entice elements of the Grand Fleet from its bases whereupon they would be crushed by a superior German force.

As at Jutland, British Naval intelligence ensured its ships knew of Scheer's intentions; it would be overwhelming British firepower (29 dreadnoughts), not German which would win the day.

Ahead of Scheer's surface ships were two lines of U-boats to catch the British off guard as they sailed to meet their foe.

The submarine pickets had failed miserably in May's titanic battle.

Not so this time around. First HMS Nottingham, one of the vessels screening the battle-cruisers of Admiral Beatty, was hit three times by torpedoes from U-52, killing 38 men and sending the cruiser to the bottom of the North Sea about 70 miles off the coast of Northumbria.

Not to be outdone, RN submarines struck at the German line of battle far to the south.

HMS E23 caught the very last



dreadnought in Scheer's formation, SMS Westfalen. She shipped 800 tonnes of water – not enough to make her sink, but sufficient to force her to turn back, assisted by a clutch of torpedo boat destroyers.

Still, the two fleets remained on a likely collision course – until the fog of war and confusion of battle

intervened.

Scouting Zeppelins spotted a formation of 30 ships steaming rapidly up the east coast towards Tyneside, among them five 'battleships'.

Scheer's dreadnoughts could easily finish off such a grouping. He turned to intercept.

The 'battleships' were actually

cruisers – although Scheer never learned of the fact. He did, however, learn that Jellicoe's battle fleet was at sea – once again the U-boat pickets paid off, flashing a signal to their masters.

The German admiral had no intention of another encounter with the entire Grand Fleet. He turned for home.

A short while later, Jellicoe learned the enemy was beyond his grasp – and ordered his ships back to harbour.

As they turned for home, they crossed the U-boat trap once more, cruiser HMS Falmouth passed perfectly through the cross-hairs of U-66's periscope. Kapitänleutnant Thorwald von Bothmer seized the opportunity and fired two torpedoes at the cruiser. Falmouth avoided the first, but not the second.

"There was a great 'wump' which shook the ship, and then a rather surprisingly quiet roar which lifted the whole forward part about four feet," gunnery officer Lt S A Pears remembered.

A column of water estimated to be 300ft tall briefly towered over the cruiser before crashing down.

Save a damage control party, most of the crew were evacuated. Those left behind tried to salvage the ship and committed the dozen dead to the deep.

Efforts to stem the flooding succeeded sufficiently for Falmouth to be taken under tow until she once more passed through the cross-hairs of a German periscope, this time U-63. Two torpedoes were enough to dispatch her to the seabed south of Flamborough Head.

It was the last action of a battle which has no name, for there was no battle as such, no encounter, just 'the action of August 19'.

Had the two sides met, there is a good chance the Royal Navy would have given the British people the 20th Century Trafalgar they yearned for; time and the weather was on the Grand Fleet's side, it had learned some of the lessons of Jutland and its commander was in fine form.

As the ship's hoisted their battle ensigns, Jellicoe signalled from his flagship HMS Iron Duke: "High Seas Fleet may be sighted at any moment. I look forward with entire confidence in the result."

■ This photograph (Q 18629) is one of more than ten million held by the Imperial War Museum. They can be viewed or purchased at www.iwmcollections.org.uk, emailing photos@IWM.org.uk, or by calling 0207 416 5333.

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Compass points the way



A COMPASS is pretty useful if you want to make progress.

So the introduction of a new Compass to the Naval Service almost a year ago was a significant event.

And this compass not only acknowledges all directions, but it also helped put the Royal Navy's stance on equality firmly on the map.

The Compass in question is the Naval Service's Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Network, represented by a rainbow compass rose.

And while huge strides have been made since openly gay personnel have been allowed to serve in the UK Armed Forces in 2000, there is still more to do.

For a start, the original gay/lesbian label has steadily evolved (and currently extends, in some quarters, to LGBTIQ – lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and questioning).

But perhaps more relevant is the fact that a group such as Compass is there to increase awareness and understanding of the issues for everybody – including those who would consider themselves 'straight'.

Such an approach makes perfect sense – the Naval Service can only attract and retain the best people by drawing from as wide a pool of talent as possible, and then ensuring they are confident enough to be themselves at work.

And Compass – previously the Naval Service LGBT Network – has a crucial role to play in this initiative.

It represents the views of serving members of the Royal Navy, Royal Marines, Royal Fleet Auxiliary and Maritime Reserves to senior management, bringing experience and expertise to bear on the formation of new policy as well as providing feedback on its effects.

And it also acts as a channel by which the general public are made aware of the Naval Service as a 'diversity champion'.

Their efforts were richly rewarded earlier in the year when influential LGBT rights charity Stonewall put the Royal Navy at tenth place (out of 400 leading employers) in their 2016 Workplace Equality Index – the highest placing for any Defence organisation.

On winning the accolade, former Chair of Compass Cdr Dougie Ward said: "This is a fantastic result for the Naval Service as a whole and reflects the hard work and commitment of not only the Serving LGBT personnel who volunteer their free time to support the Compass network, but also the Diversity and Inclusion Policy Desk at Navy Command Headquarters, and the wider Naval Service as a whole."

"This excellent result sends a strong signal to both serving personnel and people who are considering a career in the Royal Navy that the Service is committed to equality, inclusion

and diversity."

The Naval Service has actively sought out advice and guidance from leaders in the field for more than a decade.

It has been a Stonewall Diversity Champion since 2005 (the RAF and Army followed suit in 2007 and 2008 respectively), and has managed six top-100 slots in the Workplace Index in the past ten years.

Naval personnel, from junior rates to senior admirals, are regular attendees at the Stonewall Workplace Conference, where they can talk to leading lights from other sectors.

This year's event was attended by Naval Secretary Rear Admiral Simon Williams, who said: "The strong RN attendance at the annual Stonewall Workplace Conference underlines our commitment to ensuring respect and inclusivity for all our people, regardless of gender identity or sexual orientation."

"I am once again delighted to personally support this event and pay tribute to everyone across the Naval Service for creating a truly inclusive place to work."

"This is, of course, reflected in the Service recently being placed tenth in the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index of the top 100 employers in the UK, which is a fantastic achievement and one which we should all be proud of."

Also at the event was LMA Jennifer Murch, who said: "I feel so overwhelmed after such a successful day for me personally and for the LGBT community in



● Rear Admiral Nick Hine, Assistant Chief of Naval Staff (Policy), meets Naval Service personnel at the Pride in London event



● Maj Mike Cooper RM (left) and Lt Col Mike Scanlon RM support the Compass 360 event on Whale Island, encouraged by Cdre Mike Bath

the Royal Navy.

"I feel privileged to have been at the Stonewall Workplace Conference in Westminster today and I have met some inspirational role models and leaders."

Capt Henry Duffy, Commanding Officer at Britannia Royal Naval College, Dartmouth, attended the Stonewall Awards evening as senior Naval Service representative, and said he found it a "very enlightening evening", with some impressive speakers.

There was also an unofficial inter-Service competition as to who could attract most charity cash for their auction prize – and the Senior Service's 'day with the Navy' won hands down with a bid of £3,500.

Compass members, allies and senior officers have spoken at almost 40 external LGBT+ events, and this year (to date) there has been support for eight Pride events – Student Pride, Black Pride (top left), London (top right, and see page 20), Washington, Glasgow, Portsmouth, Liverpool and Cymru.

Compass does not claim to have all the answers for those seeking help or guidance, but it has access to a wide range of specialist groups or services that can assist (see below right).

Members of Compass also act as role models for colleagues, and help spread the word about the organisation and its purpose.

One example saw the Compass

360 Challenge at Whale Island in Portsmouth, when colleagues were invited to run, row and cycle 360 miles, representing the 360 degrees of a compass rose.

Split across three sites – Leach Building, West Battery and the HMS Excellent gym – such was the support that by the end of the day volunteers had more than doubled the original target, raising more than £1,000 for charity.

Second Sea Lord Vice Admiral Jonathan Woodcock, who launched the event, said: "This is a great event for a very important cause; not only to raise money for charity but also increase awareness of sexual orientation and gender identity in the Naval Service."

"I am very proud that the RN was recently placed tenth in Stonewall's top 100 employers, and it is so important to me that we build on this success and maintain a positive and supportive work environment where our people can be themselves."

Event organiser Lt Lindsey Gascoigne is perhaps better placed than most to talk of the influence Compass has.

Lt Gascoigne came out a couple of years ago, and said the support she received was vital.

"I spent the first 12 years of my career firmly locked in the closet and felt very anxious about being open about my sexual

orientation," said Lt Gascoigne.

"Hiding my identity limited my professional performance as I spent a large portion of my working day worried about not being accepted."

"In 2014 I commissioned as a Logistics Officer and saw this as a fresh start and chance to be true to myself."

"I was very nervous about my decision, but through the Compass Network I heard about the Stonewall Role Models course, which is designed to help individuals understand the importance of being an Authentic Leader and visible as LGBT within the workplace."

"As a direct result of applying this advice and becoming visible as a member of the LGBT community, I was asked to be the co-vice chair of the Compass Network, an opportunity I undertook without hesitation."

"In my role as co-vice chair I help raise awareness for sexual orientation and gender identity within the Royal Navy and external organisations."

"My work life has changed dramatically since receiving support from the Compass Network – I am now comfortable talking about my life, and being able to pay that support forward to help others is a real privilege."

"Since 'coming out' I have received enormous encouragement from my Chain of Command, and it meant a great deal to have my boss [Lt Cdr Matt Price] accompany me to this year's Pride in Defence Conference in London."

"The support he has shown me as a Divisional Officer has given me the confidence to be open – and more importantly, to be happy at work."

Lt Cdr Price as taken advantage of the support from Compass and reverse-mentoring to improve his performance as a Divisional Officer.

"I had the great pleasure to attend the Pride in Defence Conference as a guest of a

member of my division," said Lt Cdr Price.

"It was a day full of valuable insights, and provided me with a renewed vigour in ensuring that my current and future work environment is free from any form of discrimination and that I can offer support to superiors and subordinates alike facing difficult personal challenges."

"I take great pride in seeing the RN place tenth in the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index and will do my utmost to ensure that the RN continues to demonstrate its commitment to embracing diversity."

There has been peer recognition for the work done by Compass – Network co-chairs Lt Cdrs Chris Wood and Sam Truelove were both in the annual *Times* Top 50 Out Executives list, Lt Cdr Wood was listed on the annual Pride top 100 LGBT people in the UK, and Compass has been nominated for a National Diversity Award.

Compass is keen to mentor key members of the Naval Service – such as divisional officers – in issues of sexual orientation and gender identity in order to better understand their colleagues, and to ensure that each individual gives the best that they have to their work.

By way of example, Compass members have received 24 requests for support from individuals, line managers, chain of command and families on sexual orientation/gender identity issues in 2016.

By being better informed, it is hoped that the Compass membership of 250, including allies, can be expanded.

For further information and links to other organisations, see:

- www.stonewall.org.uk/
- <http://armylgbt.org.uk/>
- www.alternativeparenting.co.uk/
- www.facebook.com/RNCompass

10 – position in Stonewall's Workplace Equality Index 2016

24 – requests for support on sexual orientation/gender issues

300 – followers on Twitter (@RNCompass) Also on Facebook!

250 – network members, including allies, across the Naval Service

8 – Pride events supported in 2016

1,000,000+ – people who saw the Naval Service at Pride in London

JPA reminder

ALL personnel are required as part of annual JPA checks on OBIEE Dashboard to provide a response regarding SO (sexual orientation).

This enables the Naval Service to better understand the composition of the workforce and to identify and change issues that affect our people.

Please note that can choose the 'Do not wish to Declare' option.

Confidentiality of this data is of paramount importance; therefore not even JPA super-users in UPOs/Ship's Offices are able to see the SO of individuals, and numbers are used for statistical reasons only.



Pictures: L Phot Will Haigh, RNPOTY



Royals go Dutch

SUMMER.

Endless days. The tall grass swaying in the gentle breeze. Youngsters rope swinging over ponds or taking a dip in the languid waters of rivers limply making for the sea. The farmer watching his crops ripen. Hampers. Picnics. Hawk jets. The thump of mortar. The smell of cordite. The cries of 'Hoofin'.

The Royal Marines tore the peace of the English summer apart with three weeks of fire and thunder on the English-Scottish border.

The commandos took their main artillery batteries – the 105mm light field gun from 29 Commando Regiment Royal Artillery from Plymouth – plus the 81mm mortar troop of 42 Commando, 120mm heavy mortars from the Dutch Marines, and some anti-tank missiles from the Army's 1st Regiment Royal Horse Artillery.

And just for good measure, Army Reservists from 103rd Regiment RA and Hawk jets from RAF 100 Squadron joined in to offer some close air support, guided by 29 Cdo's Royal Marine, Royal Air Force and Royal Artillery Forward Air Controllers.

Before the full-on onslaught of lead, steel and high explosive at the Otterburn ranges – about three dozen miles outside Newcastle – Exercise Green Cannon began with participants getting down to the basics of infantry warfare, rather than artillery.

The first few days were spent

making use of Otterburn's small arms ranges, where the commando gunners tested their infantry skills before moving out into the field for a combat scenario.

"For many, after the challenges of mobile and stabilisation operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, this was the first time that they had dug field defences and operated in respirators," said Capt David Dew RA.

Green Cannon tested every facet of 3 Commando Brigade's Strike Group – from reconnaissance teams to artillery and mortars, command, control, concealment, signals, survival, local defence, medical, fuel, equipment maintenance and repair and ammunition resupply.

As for the firepower in action, the 105mm – the British Army's standard light gun – can fire up to eight rounds a minute, the shells leaving the barrel at more than twice the speed of sound before crashing down on their targets up to 12 miles away.

The 81mm mortar, operated by two-man teams of Royal Marines, drops grenades down on enemy positions about three miles away. A well-honed duo can fire 30 rounds a minute.

As well as being heavier, the Dutch 120mm is faster (rounds leave the barrel at more than 800mph) and has a greater range (eight miles) but requires six men to crew it – and even then can only spew out a maximum of ten rounds per minute.

Put them all together and you have a storm of steel any foe would think twice about braving...

...but if any enemy armour did get through, the Royal Horse Artillery had Exactor missiles – their equivalent of the Royal Marines' Javelin anti-tank weapon – at the ready.

"Green Cannon has been a really valuable opportunity to test ourselves, starting with the very basics and working up to complex fire plans where we integrated air and surface weapon systems. Every force element was tested," said Lt Col Jon Cresswell, 29 Commando's Commanding Officer.

He was at the sharp end throughout Green Cannon alongside his regimental sergeant major, WO1 James Short – and fell victim to some counter-battery fire, which left them hit by shrapnel... for the purposes of the exercise.

The pair were treated on the ground before being evacuated through the medical chain. Both reached the regiment's battlefield hospital in less than one hour – within the target time.

Also going Dutch were 1 Assault Group Royal Marines as they took their landing craft and assault boats on an 850-mile odyssey to Holland to train men to lead the amphibious attacks of the future.

An idyllic nature reserve in the heart of the Netherlands was chosen for the final test of would-be landing craftsmen and landing craft officers

– the culmination of 14 weeks of training.

The wetlands of De Biesbosch encompass 35 square miles of canals, channels, creeks and lakes squeezed between the Nieuwe Merwede and Amer rivers half a dozen miles outside the historic city of Dordrecht.

There's nothing quite like it in the UK – certainly not in the normal training areas used by 1AGRM, the Corps' specialists in amphibious warfare based at RM Tamar.

More than 100 green berets and over a dozen craft left Plymouth with two large Landing Craft Utility (capable of carrying Challenger tanks, but only loaded with a couple of Land Rovers for Exercise Green Tulip 16), two smaller Landing Craft Vehicle/Personnel, five fast ORC raiding craft and four tiny Inshore Raiding Craft.

The first week was spent in UK waters before heading across the Channel. After a three-day rest in Vlissingen in southern Holland, the group moved into the country's heartland passing through canals, locks and beneath the spans of its longest bridge, the three-mile-long Zeeland, before finally reaching Biesbosch for Exercise Green Tulip.

Experienced hands from the assault group wanted to see how the 14 recently-qualified landing craftsmen and officers fresh from courses used a small group of boats to patrol a network of confusing waterways,

reassuring the local populace and deterring any moves by an enemy.

Among the newly-qualified landing craftsmen was Mne 'Bungy' Williams. "The course has been great fun and I've learnt a lot from it.

"I look forward to the opportunity of taking the skills I've learnt and using them onboard HMS Bulwark during our deployment this autumn."

Beyond testing newbies like Bungy, the exercise also tested old hands like Cpl 'Taff' Fulton – recently recognised as the Royal Marines first Marine Engineering Officer – to prove he and his team had the skills to maintain the complex systems and engines but without all the workshops and facilities they normally rely upon.

"The three weeks away proved a real challenge – maintaining the craft without the usual base unit support. Although we faced the usual faults we experience when operating from a shore base or ship, we were left to our own devices to rectify them."

Senior officers from 1AGRM and its Dutch counterpart SATG observed the final stages of the exercise, with the RM's Col Graeme Armour delighted by what he'd seen.

"De Biesbosch National Park and the inland waterways of the Netherlands provide a perfect area for our training and development which could easily represent areas we may find ourselves operating in at some point in the future."

Exercise Green Tulip pictures: Lt Chris Chew





● HMS Somerset met up with the Chinese warship Xiangtan in the English Channel

FRE-thinking Somerset

Type 23 marks tenth activation in UK

SUNDAY, Oban, Monday, Isle of Man, Tuesday, Devonport... welcome to the world of the Royal Navy's Fleet Ready Escort, writes Sarah Fletcher.

The UK has thousands of miles of coastline, but many a foreign warship expecting to sail past our shores undetected has been surprised to find a RN ship appearing out of the blue.

What usually happens next is that the ships exchange radio greetings and the home ship shadows the visitor safely through territorial waters.

It's not a hostile act, and indeed all ships have the right of innocent passage, but it is a reminder that we have vigilant eyes and ears and a Royal Navy ship at the ready.

The ship tasked to do this is known as the Fleet Ready Escort, on standby 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, at constant high readiness to provide a range of maritime security tasks anywhere around the UK coast or further.

It could be anything from counter-narcotics and counter-terrorism to search and rescue, but escorting foreign warships is one of the principal tasks.

This summer Somerset completed her tenth activation, escorting the brand-new Chinese warship Xiangtan through the Channel en route to Kiel.

The Chinese ship found Somerset waiting as she entered the Channel from the Western Approaches. Somerset established VHF radio communications, and following a friendly exchange, the Chinese ship requested a weather report for the Channel and the two ships continued together until the visitor was out of UK waters.

Somerset's Commanding Officer, Cdr Michael Wood, said: "This was our tenth activation, and every one is different. We've conducted national tasks from the Mediterranean as far as the Arctic Circle.

"But the bulk of the ops have been Fleet Ready Escort tasks in UK home waters.

"Some foreign warships are on an overt mission and announce their intentions, but others pay a surprise visit, which means the Fleet Ready Escort tracks them.

"If the task is overt, to welcome them to UK waters, then we get on VHF radios and establish friendly communications, but by and large the first task is to intercept and then escort."

When the ship is activated intelligence is fed through Fleet Operations in Northwood via a variety of sources co-ordinated by CTF 320 - Maritime Special Operations.

Cdr Wood explained: "We will get a series of updates on the location and it's our job to refine them and localise

the target using our own aircraft and our own sensors. Then it's a case of arriving, showing UK visible presence as an escort, maintaining our distance and then shadowing that consort through the English Channel until it's clear of the UK area."

As the ship has to be at short notice to move, the programme is constrained and there are frequent changes.

"She's ready to sail at 24 hours' notice for any range of tasks. It could be search and rescue, intelligence gathering, or the escort of foreign warships through home waters.

"It can also be counter-narcotics and counter-terrorism ops. We had a major drug seizure in April 2015 after we collected five tonnes of drugs - almost a billion pounds worth - off Aberdeen."

Cdr Wood said: "It limits the ports we can go to because we don't want to be constrained in terms of tides or channels or canals or locks.

"On the downside, it puts a lot of pressure on the ship, on sensors, equipment, our helicopters, and our people, but on the upside, we have a purposeful ship's company who know they're doing an important mission."

"They know when they're activated they're going up against a real target set, it's not an exercise."

The other principal role for an anti-submarine frigate is submarine hunting - Somerset is one of the specialist ships who can deploy as TAPS - the Towed Array Patrol Ship - whose job is to find visiting submarines, which may or may not wish to remain undetected.

Cdr Wood explained: "A third of our activations are anti-submarine related, sending the ship on a towed array patrol mission to go and intercept any Russian submarines that enter UK areas of interest.

"Somerset holds the record for most drugs and number of anti-submarine successes in terms of localising foreign submarines.

"She is one of the most purposeful ships in the Navy."

There's a touch of *Hunt for Red October* about CPO Julian Lee.

Sitting in the dark of his sound room, listening with absolute concentration for the faintest acoustic signal in his headphones, he and his team are specialist submarine hunters.

CPO Lee is an expert in acoustic

analysis, and is trained to identify tonals - the noise that comes from submarines which indicates their position, speed and possible identity when the ship is running her towed array.

It's quite a niche specialisation post-Cold War, but it's coming back to the fore. These activations have become more prevalent because of the resurgence of the Russian Federation Navy," he explained.

CPO Lee trains and mentors a department of eight ABs, four Leading Hands and three POs in passive and active sonar drills and procedures and torpedo systems.

"I've got a very strong team on here because they've had the opportunity to do their core skill job, and not only their secondary or tertiary jobs that they have to do on board," he explained.

"The ABs and Leading Hands not only operate sonar, radar and close-range guns, they also work on the bridge when they're needed.

"But they're only truly happy now in the sound room, because it gives them the chance to use their core skills.

"We've had so many activations in the past 18 months that they've been given the opportunity to use those skills to good effect."

As one of only a handful of sonar CPOs in the Surface Flotilla qualified in Advanced Acoustics and who have completed the advanced Anti-Submarine Warfare course, he's qualified to take part in command planning groups and be the conduit between his department and the command team.

Leading Seaman Stores Melanie Birch is renowned throughout Somerset for her determination in getting all the kit in the right place at the right time - not an easy job for a ship whose programme can change at the drop of a hat.

She and her team of two are responsible for everything from parts for the gun to spares for the dishwasher.

She also has a secondary job, to compile the Damage Control Incident Board at action and emergency stations.

She said: "My primary role is issuing kit and acquiring kit from ashore for operational defects. These have different levels, so A1 is the highest and most important, and that could include a part for the 4.5 gun or one of the engines.

"But it could be anything from the gash compactor to the dishwasher. Everything has its own problems and we

have to fix it ourselves."

She added: "Not knowing our programme is frustrating and it makes the job harder, but if we go out for the long time, we can catch up with everything and get topside of it. Fleet Ready Escort is a challenge for sure."

Lt Carina Dubois is a Flight Observer of 829 Sqn, based at RNAS Culdrose, but ready to fly out to HMS Somerset whenever the ship needs a Merlin helicopter.

"Our squadron isn't cap-tallied to the ship, but we're at 24 hours notice to embark, and whenever Somerset needs a Merlin, it's us," she explained.

"It's much shorter notice than usual for a flight, as generally they can plan in advance, knowing when and where they're going.

"One of the main challenges is keeping everything in date, aircraft and people, to be ready to deploy.

"Maintaining the aircraft has to be done after so many flying hours and we need to plan it in around when an activation is coming.

"Then the flight crew need to keep their currency too - we have to be in date for aviation currency all the time and that can make fitting in courses and training difficult - it's the same problem for the ship of course.

"Every activation is different. Sometimes our aim is to surprise the visitor, sometimes we establish radio contact and speak to them."

Like everyone on board, she finds the short-notice activations have their pros and cons.

"The downside is that living the short-notice life isn't particularly fun. The upside is that once you're aboard and doing it, it's real-world stuff and quite exciting."

As Executive Officer, Lt Cdr Tom Boeckx is Somerset's second-in-command and the captain's right-hand man.

He has three main roles, first as second-in-command, ready to take over from the CO, secondly to prepare and manage the ship to be ready whatever Somerset is asked to do, and thirdly, responsible for the welfare of the 180 or so ship's company.

He explained: "When we go into an active task my focus shifts significantly towards the second-in-command role.

"This is my tenth activation and

each one has been very different, from escorting ships to escorting submarines.

"The downside of being Fleet Ready Escort is that there is no stability to the ship's programme and there isn't the excitement of a long overseas deployment.

"The upside is that it gives a wide range of skills and practice and when the time comes for people to move on, they can move on to other ships with longer deployments to get a bit of variety in their career."

Lt Cdr Boeckx added: "I don't think the activation itself causes particular strains. Our sailors are generally happy doing what they've been trained for, and this is one of the few tasks we do when we're actually doing live ops, so by and large I think our sailors are very happy once we're stuck into the task."



● Somerset's swimmer of the watch during a man overboard exercise



● From left, CPO Julian Lee in the ship's sound room; Somerset's Stores Office team, SC Sarah Quick, SC Nelicia Thomas and LSC Mel Birch; Cdr Michael Wood on the bridge

Pictures: LPhoto Guy Pool



Tour de



FROM the Naval strongholds of Plymouth and Portsmouth to distant sultanates, communities came together to salute and celebrate the work of the Armed Forces.

More than 250 events including parades, military displays and community fetes were staged to show appreciation for the military community, including Regulars, Reserves, their families, veterans and cadets.

The focus this year – the eighth Armed Forces Day (AFD) – was in the East of England, with the national event being hosted by the Lincolnshire town of Cleethorpes.

A host of VIPs descended on the seaside resort, including the Duke of Kent – representing the Queen and the Royal Family – the then Prime Minister David Cameron and Defence Secretary Michael Fallon.

Proceedings began with a display from the Red Arrows (*above right*), an amphibious assault on the beach from the Royal Marines (*left and far page, bottom right*) and a parachute drop from the RAF Falcons.

A parade (*below left*) of Service personnel, veterans and cadets (*below*) then marched down Cleethorpes seafront, from the North Promenade to the Boating Lake, followed by a procession of motorcyclists from the Armed Forces Bikers and the Royal British Legion bikers.

Mr Cameron said: “It made me incredibly proud to be in Cleethorpes to see so many people showing their support for our Armed Forces.

“As Prime Minister I have seen first-hand the amazing job that the men and women of all three Services do.

“Whether taking the fight to Daesh in Syria and Iraq or helping to deal with emergencies in the UK, their sacrifice keeps us safe.

“It is right that we show our support, both by holding events such as this and ensuring that those who serve or have served, and their families, are treated fairly.”

Mr Fallon said: “Today is a day to give something back to the Armed Forces community, which works so hard to keep us safe each and every day.

“In the last few years alone, our Regulars and Reserves have helped stamp out Ebola in Sierra Leone, protect the Baltic skies, rescue thousands of migrants in the Mediterranean and help hundreds of UK flood victims at home.

“And our debt of gratitude extends to the families they leave behind, and the veterans past and present who have dedicated years of their lives to service.

“It is only right that we salute them today and celebrate their achievements.”

Later in the day the crowds, estimated at around 100,000, were entertained by military displays including the Royal Navy’s Black Cats helicopter display team.

An evening of music was brought to a close by fireworks at the town’s Armed Forces Gate (*pictured below right*).

The Mayor of North East Lincolnshire, Cllr Christina McGilligan-Fell, said the borough was proud to host the event, and she spoke of the area’s strong links



with all three Services.

“We are delighted to bring together people of all ages from all over the UK to publicly thank the members of our Armed Forces for their bravery, their dedication and sacrifices they make for every one of us on a daily basis,” said Cllr McGilligan-Fell.

The head of the Royal Navy praised the people of Plymouth for their support of sailors, soldiers and airmen at the largest Armed Forces Weekend event in the UK.

One of the largest events, held on Plymouth Hoe (*top left*), was attended by First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Philip Jones, who said: “Plymouth’s event is not just a day but a whole weekend.

“This demonstrates the strong support of the people of Plymouth and Devon for the Armed Forces, and is a huge accolade for everyone here.

“There have always been very strong links between the people of Plymouth and the Royal Navy especially.

“It’s heartwarming to see such big crowds on Plymouth Hoe showing mutual support to each other.”

Highlights included an RAF and Allied Air Forces memorial service, a field gun competition between Devonport Naval Base





Forces

and HMS Raleigh, a junior field gun run, air displays and music entertainment.

Over in Northern Ireland, communities gathered in Antrim Castle Gardens and Antrim Stadium to lend their support as a parade made its way through Antrim Town.

The parade was led by the Irish Guards, and all three Services took part (*bottom of page*).

After the parade there was a drumhead service, a military capability demonstration, performances by various military bands, a static helicopter display, and plenty of entertainment for the families who joined in.

Caerphilly Castle provided the dramatic backdrop to the South Wales AFD event, which for the past decade has been held a few miles south in Cardiff.

More than 10,000 people turned out to see a parade, service and activities that included a Royal Marines band and a contingent of sailors.

Another switch of venue saw Ledbury host the Herefordshire AFD event, normally held in the county town.

And despite numerous deluges, there was an impressive turnout to mark the centenaries of Jutland and the Somme as well as salute the modern Armed Forces.

Taking part were sailors from minehunter HMS Ledbury, who paraded through their namesake market town to fly the flag for today's military.

County leaders in Herefordshire determined one major event each year should be staged through the centenary of the Great War, and that those events should extend beyond Hereford itself.

Ledbury, a dozen miles east of the county town, was selected for the combined Jutland-Somme day of remembrance, staging a mixture of living history displays and re-enactments, displays of contemporary artwork and writing, performances of period music, and film shows to keep the public entertained.

Events reached their climax with the World War 1 centenary commemoration parade, with sailors from Ledbury taking their place alongside cadets and veterans from the Royal British

Legion behind the Band of the West Midlands Fire Service.

If you've not read or heard much about the ship recently, that's because she's been in a lengthy refit in her native Portsmouth, which has included ripping out her trusty Deltic diesel engines and replacing them with modern, more efficient Caterpillar ones among other upgrades.

So the chance to renew ties with her twin town and shine a light on the work of today's RN was a welcome change from readying the Hunt-class vessel for sea.

"The focus for my ship's company has been so much 'eyes in the boat' as we recover from a lengthy period of refit," said Ledbury's Commanding Officer Lt Cdr Tom Trent.

"An opportunity such as this – to march in the town of our ship's name – is one we all relish."

Sister ship HMS Chiddingfold celebrated Armed Forces Day in Qatar with a ship's tour and sporting endeavour.

Chiddingfold joined up with British Army and Royal Air Force personnel, along with the Royal Naval Association Qatar branch, to fly the AFD flag in Doha.

The ship's company began a busy weekend by hosting a large contingent of schoolchildren from the Al-Wataniya International School.

The children instantly made an impression when they arrived at the ship wearing pirate hats which they had made at school.

They thoroughly enjoyed their tours, especially the opportunity to try out the fire-fighting equipment (*pictured right*).

In the afternoon, Crew 5 hosted the ex-military personnel who had established the RNA Doha.

The veterans then reciprocated by welcoming sailors from Chiddingfold to their RNA headquarters.

The following day required an early start as it was essential to play the Armed Forces Day football tournament before the heat became too excessive.

Held at the Doha Rugby club, members of the Royal Navy, RAF and British Army joined the people of Qatar and a large

number of British ex-patriots in the competition.

And the Senior Service took the honours, with Crew 5 eventually emerging victorious.

They lunched with veterans and British Ambassador Ajay Sharma, who was keen to emphasise the fantastic work that the Armed Forces conduct across the region.

Lt Cdr Steven White, the CO of Chiddingfold, said: "These events are a great way of showing how much people care and acknowledge the work which we do out here, and they are certainly appreciated by all members of the ship's company."

"Last year we participated in an Armed Forces Day sail-past at Plymouth Hoe, and since then we have had an extremely busy and challenging year."

"However, the support we get from our families, friends, affiliates, ex-Service personnel and members of the public makes our job much easier."

RNA branches back in the UK had important roles in the organisation of AFD events.

Woking branch, for example, held their annual Veterans and Armed Forces Day parade in front of a large crowd on a bright sunny morning in Jubilee Square, Woking.

The band of the Surrey Army Cadets Corp of Drums led a parade through the town, followed by 14 standards, including the national standards of the Fleet Air Arm Association and the Merchant Navy Association.

A short service was held in Jubilee Square, and following the exhortation and the Last Post, the Naval Prayer was said in remembrance of the victims of the Battle of Jutland and all personnel, both Royal and Merchant Navy, who lost their lives in subsequent conflicts.

A serving sailor 'did his bit' at one of the highlights of the society calendar – Royal Ascot.

CPO Stuart Bartlett, from the Joint Aircraft Repair and Transportation Squadron based in Boscombe Down, Salisbury, this year volunteered his services at Royal Ascot for their Armed Forces Day celebrations.

CPO Bartlett (*pictured far*

right), who hails from the Army garrison town of Colchester, followed in his father's footsteps in joining the Forces – though he signed up for the Senior Service, whereas his father had opted for the RAF.

CPO Bartlett joined colleagues from the Royal Navy, RAF and Army as an Ascot steward for the day.

Resplendent in full Navy uniform, Stuart was on hand throughout the day to welcome racegoers and collect donations on behalf of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity (RNRMC), ABF The Soldiers' Charity and the RAF Benevolent Fund.

The day started a little cloudy and chilly, but warmed up later – and as conditions improved, so too did the senior rate's luck.

"I had an e-mail to say they were looking for volunteers and the first thing I said was 'Why have I never been here before?'," said CPO Bartlett.

"I have volunteered at Wimbledon for the last 16 years but didn't even know they did this."

He and his wife Elizabeth are regular racegoers, so to attend in uniform was something special.

This is the fourth year running that the Trustees of Ascot Racecourse have marked out the Friday of Royal Ascot as an unofficial Armed Forces Day.

CPO Bartlett said he felt it was important to promote the Forces in the public eye, and while there was always a sense of appreciation he believes the public are now far more willing to engage with members of the military – even if it might be just to have a picture taken.

The sailor will have to get used to being in the public eye – his next job is likely to be as hangar manager of HMS Prince of Wales, the second of the UK's new Queen Elizabeth-class carriers.

The idea behind Armed Forces Day is implicit in the Armed Forces Covenant, which sets out the relationship between the nation, the state and the Armed Forces.

It recognises that the whole nation has a moral obligation to members of the Armed

Forces and their families, and it establishes how they should expect to be treated.

Armed Forces Day attracted support from across society, including a fair smattering of celebrities via social media.

Using the hashtag **#SaluteOurForces**, actress Dame Helen Mirren, adventurer Bear Grylls, actor Christopher Eccleston and TV presenters the Hairy Bikers were among many to send messages of support by posing for a photo of them saluting.

British businesses showed their support too.

The Royal Mail postmarked mail on the Saturday with 'Armed Forces Day 25 June 2016', Holt's Military Banking, run by RBS, sponsored the Cleethorpes event, Morrisons offered hot drinks to Service personnel and Aviva showed its support on London's square mile by playing an Armed Forces Day advertisement on their huge public reception screens.

🌐 www.armedforcesday.org.uk



● **Pictures:** PO(Phot) Owen Cooban, Robbie Hodgson, Laurence Platfoot, L(Phot) Ben Shread, Sgt Ross Tilly, L(Phot) Baz Wheeler and Cpl Jonathan Lee van Zuyl





Top-value air fare



FAST jets. Slow biplanes. Sleek fighters. Classic bombers. The past, present and future of the Fleet Air Arm. Yeovilton pretty much had something for everybody at this year's Air Day.

The odd cloud and occasional shower did little to spoil the day for the 35,000-plus enthusiasts who made their way to the Somerset Naval air station for one of the top military shows of the summer.

First up was a Diamond 4 formation of two Wildcats and two Lynx Mk 8s – the latter making their final appearance at their home base as they are due to bow out of service before next year's show.

"We are really pleased to welcome everyone to RNAS Yeovilton from far and wide," said Cdre Jon Pentreath, Commanding Officer of the base.

"We have assembled a magnificent wealth of talent from across the globe to make this day very special."

A thunderous display by one of the local favourites drew loud cheers and applause from the spectators.

Fly Navy Heritage Trust's iconic Sea Vixen is the last of its type to be airborne, and the aerial passes by the all-British twin-boom, twin-jet fighter, a familiar sight on the Royal Navy's carriers in the 1960s and early 1970s, were a highlight of the day.

Amongst the other impressive displays, both static and flying, were those by the Jordanian Falcons and the Pitts Special.

The Pitts pilot experiences in just eight minutes the kind of forces a racing driver experiences in two hours of a Grand Prix – some have likened it to being in a tumble drier.

The Fleet Air Arm demonstrated their front-line capability with a display by the Black Cats team – a pair of Wildcats from 825 Naval Air Squadron.

On landing after the display, team leader and pilot of Black 1 Lt Cdr Dave Lilly said: "This was a fantastic display for us showing what we can do with our Wildcats at our home base in front of our home crowd.

"It's a privilege to display to our community."

Winners of the Best Fixed Wing Display award went to the French Navy Rafale pair, and amongst the other aircraft spotted in the air were Junglie Merlins, a Norwegian MiG-15, Typhoon, Apache, Bronco, Corsair, Gazelles, Hawks, a Seafire, a Swordfish and a B-17 Flying Fortress, to say nothing of the Royal Navy Raiders parachute team.

But it was not only the machines in the sky that drew attention – one visiting aircraft generated queues of up to two hours to take a peek at its flight deck.

And it was the gigantic C-17 Globemaster, flown to Somerset by the USAF reservists of the 315th Airlift Wing, from Charleston, that won the prize for best static display at the show.

Or rather, it was the gigantic C-17 and its miniature replica, built on the chassis of a John Deere Gator utility vehicle, that won the prize – the mini-me has been a hit at shows across the States, but Yeovilton was its first outing on this side of the Atlantic.

Also making its debut at Yeovilton was Navy Wings, an initiative by the Fly Navy Heritage Trust which will see a closer collaboration between the Trust and other owners of historic Naval aircraft, helping to tell the story of how Naval aviation and aviators of the past link to the present and (as the Fleet Air Arm prepares for the arrival of the Queen Elizabeth-class carriers in service) the future.

Helping to cement the arrival of the Navy Wings brand was a display by the predecessor of the Lynx – the diminutive Westland Wasp HAS1.

The official launch of Navy Wings was carried out at the air day by author and journalist Frederick Forsyth, a former RAF fighter pilot and a long-standing ambassador for the Fly Navy Heritage Trust.

With the crowds dispersing and the stallholders packing up, thoughts turned to the other big Royal Navy air show at Culdrose, which was taking place as *Navy News* went to press – see our September edition for a report and pictures from the Cornish air station.

Pictures: LPhot Dan Rosenbaum



Severn visits her 'home'

SAILORS from HMS Severn reaffirmed their ties with their twin town – and paid homage to heroic wartime mariners – when they visited Newport in Wales.

The fishery patrol ship has been bound with the port (actually a city, on the banks of the Usk, not the Severn) since she was launched back in 2003.

She was invited to take a break from fishery protection duties and spend a weekend in the bosom of her Welsh friends – who first enjoyed some good RN hospitality, courtesy of a reception hosted by her junior ratings.

The ship's company almost trebled, with more than 75 guests filing aboard – everyone from representatives of Newport City Council to local hospital employees, police and other leading civic figures.

The next morning, the sailors paid their respects at the Raymond Victor Steed Memorial, erected to one of Newport's own.

The monument honours the second-youngest person killed on active service with British and Commonwealth forces in World War 2.

Raymond Steed, a galley boy, was just 14 years and 207 days old when the merchant ship Empire Morn hit a mine off Morocco, wrecking her stern – including the accommodation block. Raymond died along with 20 of his shipmates.

More than 70 years later, the Merchant Navy Association and Arctic Convoy veterans gathered to pay their respects with HMS Severn's crew at the monument, which lies in the shadow of the A48 road bridge over the Usk.

Sailors invited youth groups, Sea Cadets and schoolchildren to tour their ship and then spent another evening of hosting local VIPs and veterans for a capability demonstration which culminated with the traditional ceremonial sunset.

The ship's footballers took on city council staff and claimed a 5-5 draw.

Torpedo made safe

AFTER shell found on beach, we bring you torpedo found on submarine...

Ninety-nine years after German U-boat UC-32 sank off Sunderland, her disintegrating wreck deposited a live torpedo on to the bed of the North Sea.

Carrying out the first inspection of the wreck since 1996, HMS Blyth found that the condition of the 160ft submarine, which lies in about 40ft of water a quarter of a mile from Roker lighthouse, had deteriorated significantly over the intervening two decades.

UC-32 had been laying a minefield off the Wear in February 1917 when she was ripped apart when one detonated. Only three of her crew survived; more than 20 men were killed.

The boat was torn in three sections, with much of her innards spilling onto the seabed.

Over time, any ordnance discovered has been rendered safe, but when Blyth's divers and Seafox submersible carried out the latest inspection, they found a loaded torpedo tube lying exposed.

"The last thing we want is for a fisherman to drag up the torpedo or get themselves in any trouble in that way," said Lt Cdr Peter Higgins, Blyth's CO.

With the site being a war grave, however, his divers chose a 'low-order' detonation – using a small amount of explosive to neutralise the torpedo, without causing extensive damage to the rest of the wreck.

Pompey's finest

STAR sailors from the Royal Navy's Portsmouth flotilla have been rewarded for their outstanding achievements by the Armed Forces Minister.

In her last day in office – she is now a Minister in the Department of Work and Pensions – Penny Mordaunt presented awards to personnel who have gone the extra mile for their ship or unit during the past 12 months.

The ceremony was held on board HMS Victory and was followed by a dinner at HMS Nelson.

Two recipients of the award are based on the aircraft carrier HMS Queen Elizabeth, currently in build at Rosyth.

CPO Graeme Duncan was recognised for his efforts in working with industry to ensure that the ship's fresh water system, galley and laundry were ready for the ship's company to move on board.

MA Louise Whalley was rewarded for her key role in introducing and managing the ship's first aid and medical training plans, and for tailoring effective bespoke training.

Commander Portsmouth Flotilla Cdre Peter Sparkes said: "In a challenging year when the Portsmouth Flotilla has scarcely been busier, it is really important that we recognise some of the extraordinary individual efforts of our sailors, which contribute so powerfully to our collective



● Portsmouth Flotilla award winners gather on HMS Victory with Penny Mordaunt, on her last day as Armed Forces Minister, Second Sea Lord Vice Admiral Jonathan Woodcock (to left of Ms Mordaunt) and Commander Portsmouth Flotilla Cdre Peter Sparkes (ninth from right)

Picture: LPhoto Kyle Heller

successes.

"I am delighted that the Minister for the Armed Forces agreed to present these awards in the presence of the recipients' partners today, and I am also grateful to BAE Systems and the Royal Navy Royal Marines Charity for their support in making it possible."

Special guests at the award ceremony included Second Sea Lord Vice Admiral Jonathan Woodcock and partners of the award winners, along with representatives from 12 Livery Companies with affiliations to the Portsmouth Flotilla, including Shipwrights, Merchant Taylors and Fishmongers.

The day before the awards

ceremony saw the Flotilla come together for a sports day and fun event on Clarence Field for ships and Naval Base teams, with around 200 people competing or watching.

A dozen teams entered, competing in events ranging from human table football to an inflatable assault course and human skittles.

The winning team was from the Waterfront Logs Support Group.

The day ended with a barbecue and music, with BAE Systems footing the bill for the event.

The award winners were: CPOET(ME) Graeme Duncan (HMS Queen Elizabeth);

MA Louise Whalley (HMS Queen Elizabeth);

CPO(ME) David Mcallen (2nd Mine Counter Measures Squadron);

LET(ME) (L) Christopher Butler (2nd Mine Counter Measures Squadron);

Leading Diver Jay Proctor (2nd Mine Counter Measures Squadron);

Lt Alexandra Harris (HMS Mersey);

LET(WE) Darren Clayton (HMS Severn);

ET(ME)1 Alexander Edwards (HMS Tyne);

Leading Chef Russell Aitken (HMS St Albans);

CPOET(ME) Davidson (HMS Westminster);

LSC Raquel Marter (HMS Westminster);

Lt Ben Lewis (HMS Daring);

MA Emma Bull (HMS Daring);

LA/CPO John Edmunds (HMS Dauntless);

LS(Sea) Adam Drozdowski (HMS Defender);

PTI Luke Steele (HMS Diamond);

PO David Pitcher (HMS Duncan);

MA Louise Craig (HMS Duncan);

LS(EW) Timothy Dodge (HMS Dragon);

PO(Sea) Daniel Tregarthen (HMS Iron Duke);

ETWE(CIS) Oliver Darnell (HMS Iron Duke);

Lt Keith Tobin (HMS Kent);

LCH Spender Mhlanga (HMS Kent);

Leading Diver Scott McAllister (Northern Diving Group);

PO(D) Nicholas McPherson (Southern Diving Group);

PO(D) Johnathon Norris (Fleet Diving Unit 1);

LS Carl Butterworth (HMS Richmond);

POET(WE) Lee McCartney (HMS Richmond);

Lt Amy Willcocks (HMS Clyde).

POWtr Pete Gladden (PORFLOT HQ);

Lt Cdr Christopher Holmes (PORFLOT HQ);

W01 Kevin Smith (Hunt Class Output Management) – Joint Commander's Commendation.



● Lt Matt Poulson (left) and Sub Lt Sean Quigley (both HMS Richmond) compete in the PORFLOT sports day

Picture: Cdr Jonathan Carrigan

Pride in the Senior Service

RECORD crowds of around one million people attended the annual Pride in London event – and watched the Royal Navy contingent lead the military group through the heart of the capital.

The sailors, along with their Army, RAF and MOD civil service colleagues, were amongst 40,000 who took part in the parade – a particularly poignant occasion following the deaths in Orlando the previous fortnight.

Event organiser Surg Lt Cdr Mike Hill said: "I'm incredibly proud that so many officers and ratings volunteered to stand in unity with the LGBT+ community and friends in defiance of hatred."

Penny Mordaunt, Armed Forces minister at the time, told defence participants: "After the terrible events two weeks ago, I joined hundreds of people in London who came together to show their solidarity with the community in Orlando."

"The attack in Orlando was an act of terror, but terrorists don't have a monopoly on terror."

"And that is why you are so important"

"When nations see you marching, treasured by your nation, they will stop, think and know this is not just a reflection of the society you serve; it is because you are absolutely essential in the defence of it."

The contingent was made up from members of Compass, the sexual orientation and gender



● The Royal Navy contingent at this year's Pride in London parade

identity network of the Naval Service which supports the breadth of the Service (see page 13).

"It was an amazing day, the atmosphere was one of solidarity and love," said AB Michael Day.

"The applause we received as we marched made me feel proud knowing the LGBT+ community supports us and stands with us against hatred."

MA Amy Risker-Woods said: "Marching in the parade shows how committed the Navy is to all those who serve, regardless of

sexual orientation or gender, and whilst I happen to be married to a woman, this support is given to everyone's families and the wider community."

The following day, Compass also supported UK Black Pride, celebrating the contribution made to the Naval Service by black LGBT+ officers and ratings.

Attending these events was Rear Admiral Nick Hine, Assistant Chief of Naval Staff (Policy), who said: "People perform best when they feel

valued and supported, and can be themselves."

"We need the best people, and we need them to feel included."

"It makes me proud to see our people, whether LGBT+ or straight ally, marching in London; building on our success as a Top Ten employer in the UK's Stonewall Workplace Equality Index."

Members of Compass also support other pride and diversity events across the country, and can be followed through their twitter account @RNCompass

Arctic veterans gather

MAJOR commemorations are due to take place at the end of this month in northern Russia to mark the 75th anniversary of the convoys which delivered vital aid in World War 2.

For four years the Royal Navy ferried military supplies to the USSR to support it in its struggle against the Germans on the Eastern Front – at the cost of more than 3,000 lives, running the gauntlet of U-boats, the Luftwaffe and horrendous weather conditions.

Archangelsk, the destination for many convoys, will be the focal point of 75th anniversary events on August 31, attended by VIPs, senior military figures, the Defence Attaché in Moscow, Capt Chris Connolly RN, the Band of HM Royal Marines, and a small number of convoy veterans – now all in their 90s.

One sadly unable to attend through ill health is James 'Jimmy' Pitts, a well-known figure in Russia for his wartime exploits.

In 2013 he was chosen as a torch bearer for the Sochi Winter Olympics, carrying the flame through the streets of Archangelsk.

Jimmy served as a Telegraphist/Air Gunner in Avenger torpedo bombers and recounted his experiences – and the long post-war struggle by Arctic veterans to receive recognition for their efforts – in a book.

As a precursor to the 75th anniversary commemorations, Capt Connolly presented a signed copy of *To Russia and Back* to the Museum of the Great Patriotic War (as World War 2 is known in Russia), where it can be found next to Jimmy's Arctic Star, which he donated back in November 2013.

New views of the Mary Rose

VISITORS to the Mary Rose Museum in Portsmouth will be able to share the same space as the Tudor warship for the first time in more than 20 years.

As of last month, onlookers were able to see stunning panoramic views of the ship from all nine galleries through floor-to-ceiling glazing on the lower and main decks.

On the upper deck, there is only a balcony between them and the hull itself, entering the space through an air lock to allow them to experience stunning views of the ship.

The only 16th-Century warship on display in the world, Mary Rose has been undergoing continuous conservation since she was raised from the bed of the Solent, just south of Southsea Castle, in 1982.

The hull was first sprayed with a mist of fresh chilled water and then with a water-soluble wax from 1994.

In April 2013 the remains of the ship entered a stage of controlled air-drying.

The hull has now reached a stable state within this drying process which allows the black drying ducts to be removed – which allows visitors to see the Mary Rose in all her glory, unobstructed, for the first time in more than 34 years.

Mary Rose was launched in the summer of 1511 and had a 34-year career before her ill-fated sally from Portsmouth Harbour.

She is believed to have been refitted in the mid-1530s, which may have resulted in a degree of instability – she capsized and sank in relatively benign conditions on July 19 1545 while engaging a French invasion fleet, resulting in the deaths of hundreds of sailors.



Wildlife menagerie

Lynx joins dolphin for Exercise Iron Eagle

A ROYAL Marines sniper aims his rifle at a drug-trafficker attempting to evade him in the waterways of northern Florida.

Thus did a two-week exercise by Naval aviators and commandos honing their skills with the American brethren come to an end – like many real joint counter-narcotics operations involving the two nations.

Lynx fliers from 815 Naval Air Squadron in Yeovilton, Somerset, and green berets from 43 Commando Fleet Protection Group, whose snipers can – and do – shoot out the drug-runners' engines, were invited to take part in Iron Eagle alongside the US Coast Guard.

The two countries have worked for decades on Operation Martillo, the international effort across the Caribbean attempting to stop the flow of illegal narcotics from South and Central America to North America and Europe.

The Royal Navy maintains an almost constant presence in the region – tanker RFA Wave Knight with a Lynx helicopter

and Royal Marines is currently on patrol – leading to regular success, most recently £35m of narcotics intercepted by RFA Lyme Bay.

To ensure they keep ahead of their foes, particularly with the use of air power, the Americans decided to run a joint two-week exercise with the RN – Iron Eagle.

More than 40 Brits plus two Lynx Mk8 flew the 4,000 miles to Naval Air Station Jacksonville

and, having got used to the climate, the environment, the helicopters used by the US Coast Guard –

MH65 Dolphins – and honed marksmanship skills against moving and stationary targets, Iron Eagle began in earnest.

The Brits experienced Coast Guard tactics and manoeuvres as they flew in Dolphins chasing down a specialist training vessel used by the Americans to replicate the go-fasts used by drug-runners.

And the Lynx crews took the American pilots and snipers up to give them an idea of how their nimble helicopter could

keep up with even the most aggressively-handled go-fast.

In between there were intercepts in the dark with the assistance of night vision goggles, some live firings with the Lynx's .50 calibre machine gun over the North Atlantic (Jacksonville is barely 15 miles from the ocean) and a lot of developing tactics in the hope of anticipating the smugglers' every move.

It came to a climax with a hunt which almost precisely mirrored a real-life bust as a US Customs P3 Orion surveillance aircraft was launched to track a suspicious craft off the Florida coast, followed shortly afterwards by a Lynx to intercept – and stop – the vessel.

Once the boat had been found, the Lynx ordered it to stop – messages were broadcast in English and Spanish – but with no response.

Nor did shots across the bow halt the smugglers' progress, so the commando snipers took out the engines, while a Coast Guard boarding

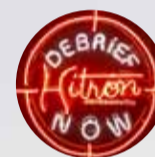
team from a cutter closed in to arrest the crew, search the boat and seize the drugs... Just as occurs time and again in real-life drug busts in the Caribbean.

A full debrief took place at Jacksonville, home of the US Coast Guard's Helicopter Interdiction Tactical Squadron, known as Hitron.

The lessons learned during Iron Eagle will prove useful both during the Lynx's current – and final – deployment to the Caribbean on Wave Knight, and regular deployments by its successor Wildcat, equipped with a far more powerful suite of sensors, from next year.

"The Royal Navy remains at the forefront of counter-narcotics operations. With Iron Eagle we've laid the groundwork for Wildcat to continue the sterling service that the Lynx has given for a generation," said Lt Cdr Stuart Irwin, who commanded the detachment to Jacksonville.

"The exercise has also provided an excellent opportunity to enhance our already-strong partnership with the US Coast Guard."





(S)warm reception on Clyde

THINKING about causing trouble on the Clyde?

Think again. This is a show of force by the river's green guardians: 43 Commando Fleet Protection Group Royal Marines.

The unit took the full range of their patrol craft out on to Gareloch for a rare demonstration of combined strength.

Together with the P2000 craft of the Faslane Patrol Boat Squadron – HMS Tracker and Raider – it's the duty of these boats to protect the waterfront at Faslane Naval Base and any incoming and outgoing vessels.

That's the entire flotilla of Sandown-class minehunters, the nation's nuclear deterrent (four Vanguard-class boats), and the three active Astute-class hunter-killers at present, plus the remaining T-boats by the decade's end as the Silent Service is concentrated on the Clyde.



The marines took nine boats and four different classes out on to Gareloch for the squadron exercise.

The largest craft in their arsenal: two souped-up former police boats Mull and Rona, painted RM green, fitted with three gun mountings for GPMGs, they're capable of churning up the Clyde at speeds over 30kts (35mph).

Flanking the Island-class boat here are four ORC raiders – gunboats again armed with machine-guns, but able to reach 40kts (45mph) flat out.

One step further outwards and we come to Pacific 24 RIBs which are the mainstay of all RN/RM boat operations.

And just for good measure, on the outermost protective ring, the small, inflatable Inshore Raiding Craft, typically used for stealthily landing small detachments of commandos on hostile shores.

Picture: CPO(Phot) Tam McDonald, FRPU North



Picture: Cpl Jamie Peters, RLC

Sweat saves flood

THIS is Manchester.

Yes, really. Dry, dusty, troops huddling down in a quarry as a Merlin drops in.

And this is a flood relief exercise.

Yes, really. Dry, dusty, not a drop of rain.

The fliers of the Commando Helicopter Force were invited to help fire and rescue teams and civic authorities in the North West practise dealing with a major civilian emergency – such as the terrible floods which ravaged much of Cumbria, Lancashire and Yorkshire last Christmas.

The day-long Exercise Triton II was billed as the largest real-time work out of its kind ever held in the region as three dozen military, civilian and emergency services and organisations came together to tackle simulated severe flooding in Stockport and Oldham.

Yeovilton-based 845 Naval Air Squadron sent one Jungle Merlin north to Barton aerodrome on

the western edge of Manchester, accompanied by an Oshkosh bowser and two crew to refuel the marines' helicopter as well as an RAF Chinook also taking part.

The Merlin acted as troop carrier, the wocca-wocca was used to lift high-volume water-pumping equipment from Mayer's Quarry in Mossley, Oldham, to nearby Dove Stone Reservoir.

The exercise saw soldiers from 2nd Battalion The Mercian Regiment build defences at an electricity sub-station in Heyrod, Stockport, to protect it from rising flood waters.

Troops and mountain rescue personnel were then flown by Merlin to help with a search and rescue exercise at Hollingworth Lake, Littleborough, before spending the rest of the day buzzing around Greater Manchester moving military and civilian personnel between the various hotspots such as the site of a bus crash into a river.

"For our part, it was a very

rewarding day," said Merlin pilot Lt Tom Burrows. "The tasking offered us some challenging flying, and it was an added bonus to support the civilian emergency services, alongside soldiers from 42 Infantry Brigade.

"The exercise gave an insight as to our likely involvement in responding to a civil emergency, something the squadron can take forward to be well-prepared in the future."

Paul Argyle, Manchester's Deputy Fire Chief, who oversaw Triton II, said the "scale of the destruction and chaos in the exercise was deliberately designed to test the region at full stretch.

"We have to do this to ensure we are well prepared to deal with any future real-life event or disaster that might occur – and it is also invaluable that those taking part got the chance to practise essential response skills that would be used during a major incident like this."



DEEP BLUE II

DEEPER. BLUER. TWO-ER.

OK. Not necessarily deeper – the Western Med is generally shallower than the eastern Atlantic. But the water's certainly bluer. Azure no less. And this is the second run out for Deep Blue.

The first, a couple of years ago using HMS Illustrious as the springboard, was a pure-sub hunt as the Fleet Air Arm re-learned the art of sustained anti-submarine operations, not practised on a grand scale since the Cold War.

Keeping enemy boats at bay is all well and good... but little use if your carrier is knocked out by missile or air attack.

Which is where Deep Blue 2 came in: submarine hunting at its heart, but with surface and air attacks thrown into the mix with one eye on keeping the Mighty O safe but, ultimately, aimed at developing tactics to protect the Queen Elizabeth carrier battle group around the clock – wherever that threat might come from.

"We need to be ready in all respects when the new carrier arrives," explained Lt Max White, a tactical observer with 814 NAS.

"We need to know that we are ready to provide protection to the carrier before she goes to sea for the first time. There's only one way to do that, and that is to practise on ships that we have now.

"The Merlin is an incredible aircraft to fly and is extremely capable at a host of tasks, not least anti-submarine operations.

"It's amazing to think that one day we will be responsible for safeguarding one of the most important assets our country will ever own.

"Pitting your wits against submarine crews with many hundreds of years experience between them is a little daunting.

"However, our equipment, training and personnel could not be better. We are the envy of many navies, I'm sure."

This isn't the first time the Flying Tigers have been hunting submarines in the Mediterranean this year, having taken part in another major exercise against submarines from countries across NATO whilst based in Sicily back in the spring.

And last year the Merlins conducted humanitarian missions from multiple locations around the Mediterranean utilising their advanced sensors to search for, and rescue, victims of people smuggling.

"We are regular visitors to this part of the world," said Cdr Brendan Spoor, 814's CO.

"However, this time we returned to our roots. The Flying Tigers were born almost 80 years ago with the purpose of protecting aircraft carriers and ships in a task force.

"It's fitting that we are preparing to return to that role again."

Sharing Mediterranean skies and Ocean's deck with 814 were Britain's last Sea Kings, Baggers from 849 NAS. Okinawa Flight – one of three belonging to the Culdrose-based formation – joined the Mighty O as work-up for its impending tour of duty.

"It's a great chance to work with fast jets and on a large, busy deck," said observer Lt Jon Duke. "Having all these assets available in one place at the same time, operating at a fast tempo, is more than invaluable to us."

Did he say fast jets? Yes, yes, he did. Culdrose must have been all but empty for the duration of Deep Blue

2 because the Hawks of 736 NAS also flew out from Cornwall, though not to Ocean's flight deck, but the tarmac at Gib. They played both defender and attacker in the anti-air side of the exercise, flexing their wings away from the squadron's normal playground of the South Coast Exercise Areas (they'll be back in the Med shortly, this time operating from Albania when the UK's JEF task group (the new name for Cougar...) conducts its autumn work-out.

For now, however, there's enough from Deep Blue 2 to keep the experts back in Blighty busy. Poring over the reports, data and first-hand accounts at grey Merlin HQ in Culdrose is Deputy Commander of the Merlin Force Lt Cdr Ian 'Reg' Varley.

"The first Deep Blue was about remembering how an anti-submarine squadron can operate at sea. Deep Blue 2 is a stepping stone towards HMS Queen Elizabeth and protecting the carrier task group," he said.

The exercise will also help shape the future of Culdrose's Merlin force, which will undergo substantial changes over the next couple of years to meet the demands of the RN from 2020 when Queen Elizabeth will be operational:

- 820 Naval Air Squadron, currently deployed in the Middle East helping to keep sea lanes open, will be permanently assigned to Queen Elizabeth as part of her air group of helicopters and F-35B Lightning II jets.
- 824 NAS will continue to train all Merlin air and ground crews – including for the new 'eyes of the fleet' version of Merlin, Crowsnest – and round-the-clock support for protecting home waters.
- 814 NAS will merge with 829 NAS to create a 'super squadron' expected to provide flights for Type 23 frigates (as 829 does presently), a Merlin for the duty towed-array patrol ship (the Type 23 which responds to submarine activity), and a smaller Merlin force to join either Queen Elizabeth or Prince of Wales if required.
- And 849 NAS will transform from a Sea King to a Merlin squadron, continuing to perform its airborne surveillance missions, but in a Bagger Merlin (the Crowsnest), rather than a Bagger Sea King.

All of which will happen by the end of 2018.

In addition, by the beginning of 2017 Merlin aircrew will have a shiny new simulator to play with: 65 per cent of observer and 55 per cent of pilot training is now 'synthetic'.

The existing system receives a complete overhaul, including photo-realistic graphics and the addition of the Queen Elizabeth flight deck.

For although setting down on Britain's biggest warship – the flight deck covers 4½ acres, or 60 tennis courts – it will have completely different aerodynamic characteristics than any other ship, which will affect the helicopter's handling when landing and taking off; a team is already working on computer modelling to help the fliers.

The flow of air isn't the only consideration.

"Yes, it's a big flight deck, but it's also a busy flight deck – fast jets, our Merlins, Commando Merlins, visiting aircraft," Lt Cdr Varley pointed out.



pictures: lphot guy pool, hms ocean



847 TO



THE Wildcat (*Felis silvestris*) can be found widely across Europe, Africa and Asia.

The Wildcat (*BRH*) can now also be found in North America...

... thanks to 847 Naval Air Squadron, who took their Battlefield Reconnaissance Helicopters to Arizona to conduct vital desert training.

And if you need a suitably dry, dusty piece of land to test the kit, then you probably need look no further than the Marine Corps Air Station Yuma.

Located just a few miles outside the city that features in the title of (but not the film itself) the John Ford Western *3.10 to Yuma*, the air station might initially seem an unlikely place to find a Royal Navy unit.

But appearances can be deceptive, because MCAS Yuma is at the cutting edge of military aviation – and an ideal place to fly.

Yuma is just about the sunniest city in the United States, and weather forecasters will not be pushed to the limits here – there is less than four inches of rain in a typical year, and the temperature hits 100°F on almost 120 days per annum.

So your flying programme is very unlikely to be affected by the weather – which is why the station proclaims itself the 'Marine Corps' premier aviation training base', supporting 80 per cent of the Corps' air-to-ground aviation training.

Right up 847's street then, which is why some 88 members of the squadron, including aircrew and engineers, left Yeovilton at the beginning of June for the journey to the south-west corner of the United States, just eight miles from the Mexican border.

Half-a-dozen Wildcats – of 661 Army Air Corps – from RAF Brize Norton to

The deployment – Exercise split into two distinct phases

The first saw desert environment training, making full use of miles of bombing and av the region – a mix of mo desert and cactus.

Nine Royal Navy pilots through their paces in both single aircraft or in pairs u as well as mountain and t

This was followed by a .50 Cal live firing on the ra

Once all aircrew were – 'interoperability and tac Marine Corps.

This mission-specific p of local units, including v Lightnings – the aircraft Elizabeth-class carriers th

One important elemen Forward Air Control seri Cobras, UH-1Y Hueys as v

There was also esco training with the V-22 Osprey

As the Navy teams mo specific training, so th arrived to conduct their c qualification training.

Despite a busy progr manoeuvres in high tempo

YUMA

– a mix of 847's and those
flew out in C-17 aircraft
meet them.

cise Wildcat Raider – was
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f the thousands of square
viation training ranges in
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and five aircrewmembers went
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qualified, Phase 2 began
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ackage made good use
work with American F-35
that will give the Queen
their punch.

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well as the Lightnings.
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oved on to their mission-
e soldiers of 661 AAC
own desert environmental

ramme – the first such
eratures – members of 847

found time to conduct some adventurous training
as well as make the most of their surroundings.

The 100,000 square-mile Sonoran Desert, of which
Yuma is a part, is the hottest desert in North America.

But the Colorado River, which slices through the
area, brings welcome relief and means there are
plenty of opportunities for 'fun in the sun' – did we
mention that the sun shines for 90 per cent of the
daylight hours in Yuma?

So the Brits managed to squeeze in a day of
adventurous training at Lake Martinez, some 60
miles north of Yuma on the Colorado River, which
boasts a range of watersports including fishing,
and the chance to do a bit of birdwatching.

Members of the squadron also tried a more
leisurely form of pursuit – tubing (or floating in a
rubber ring) in groups down the Colorado River
– and those with a little more taste for adventure
went tandem skydiving.

The British Servicemen and women were
also invited to ride along with the local police
department, helped distribute supplies at a food
bank, and took some time off over the July 4 period
to join the locals as they celebrated independence
from the British Empire.

Following on from cold weather training in the
icy wastes of Norway earlier in the year, the harsh
desert conditions provided some new challenges
(and some variations on the familiar – landing in a
dusty 'brown-out' and a dazzling snowy 'white-out'
are not a million miles apart).

Once back in the UK with their aircraft, 847 can
look forward to some summer leave before getting
back to the training routine in the autumn.



Delight for dinghy duo in world record bid

Two intrepid sailors celebrate the end of their world record dinghy sailing voyage.

Plymouth-based duo LH Phil Slade and MOD worker Mark Belamarich are waiting for their trip to be verified by the Guinness World Records, which had a team recording the attempt on an escorting yacht from Plymouth to Portsmouth, via France.

Mark said they were relieved to complete the endurance challenge because the weather was against them, at first too much wind, then not enough.

“At one stage we were definitely panicking we wouldn’t make it – no wind and 45 miles from Portsmouth. I was worried we would just drift. We had to put up every sail we could to catch the wind.”

Mark explained the weather was not the only issue; they had nowhere to sleep, with limited food and were always vulnerable to collisions with other large ships in the dark on the busiest shipping lane in the world:

“It was a great challenge but physically demanding. We didn’t drink a lot of water and there was a bit of boredom at times but we didn’t fight! There were stages where we thought we wouldn’t make it.”

Phil, who works for 30 Commando, Royal Marines, at Stonehouse in Plymouth, said: “The challenge is great for Royal Navy and Royal Marines Sailing, as well as the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity.

“We believe in the charity,

which is why we put ourselves out as far as we did.

“They look after our serving personnel, families and veterans, so it is great to raise their profile. We’re still hoping to raise the full amount of £5,000.”

Rebecca Saunders, of the RNRMC, said: “I’m so happy for the guys. They really dug deep in conditions far from ideal and should be really proud of themselves for completing all their miles.

“I look forward to hearing if they’ve achieved the world record that they so deserve.

“Thank you to all the family, friends and co-workers who have got behind Mark and Phil’s challenge and made a donation to the charity.”

Lt Col Nik Cavill, CO 30 Commando Information Exploitation Group, said: “This is an outstanding achievement by Leading Hand Phil Slade; 30 Commando and the wider Royal Marines are immensely proud of him and Mark, who have demonstrated great mental and physical endurance to try and break this world record of the longest distance sailed in a double-handed dinghy.”

The planned route was 320 nautical miles, the actual route is expected to exceed this. The time taken was 71hrs 45mins (hit by low winds which hampered speed).

To make a donation visit uk.virginmoneygiving.com/camberbosunchallenge

● **Right: Phil and Mark celebrate arriving in Portsmouth**

Picture: L(Phot) Kyle Heller



Britannia reign in Beacons

A TEAM from Britannia Royal Naval College won this year’s Beacons Challenge adventure.

Fifteen teams of four from across the Naval Service took part in the annual two-day challenge, held in the Brecon Beacons.

The event is a race against the clock consisting of a 25km mountain walk, 30km bike phase and a 500-metre kayak.

Representing BRNC were WO1 Andy Holmes and Lts Aidan Pinder, Al Hall and Chris Matthews. All four are instructors at the Royal Naval Leadership Academy.

WO1 Holmes said: “Personally I like a challenge and to challenge myself. I’d heard about this event, but I’d been unable to enter before.

“The weather on the first day was quite challenging. It was muggy, overcast and visibility was limited. The mountain biking was fun, with some really challenging sections. Overall it was a really well organised event, so credit to LPT Christopher Quinn, the organiser. We are hoping to go back next year and defend our title.”

Second place went to CLR, who were followed by the Royal Marines team from RNAS Yeovilton and then the station’s Royal Navy team. Others taking part included two teams from Navy Command HQ, the London University Royal Navy Unit, HMS Collingwood (Lt Glen Kerrigan, Lt Cdr Priddy Hattle, Lt Samira Pashneh-Tala and AB Matt Haydon), HMS Talent and two teams from HMS Queen Elizabeth and Raleigh.

Students inspired by explorer

STUDENTS were given a glimpse of adventurer Robert Falcon Scott’s original school records from his days under training on board HMS Britannia in the 1880s.

The group of 12 from Stoke Damerel Community College in Plymouth were shown the document and other artefacts relating to the history of Royal Navy Officer training during a visit to Britannia Royal Naval College in Dartmouth.

A bust of the renowned Antarctic explorer stands as a centrepiece in the entrance of Stoke Damerel college and Scott’s name has also been chosen for a

new studio school, which the college is sponsoring.

Scott, a Plymouth-born Naval Officer, started his education on board HMS Britannia, a wooden hulk moored in the River Dart in 1881, aged just 13.

Kaliah Burley, 14, is a member of the Sea Cadets and hopes to study at BRNC. She said: “I enjoyed looking around the museum and learning about Scott.”

Headteacher Martyn Cox said: “It was fascinating to see Scott’s record which demonstrated his academic progress and excellent leadership skills and to see the quality of training.”

Damsels complete challenge

DEFENCE duo Samantha Truelove and Jacqueline Davies celebrate completing the gruelling Ötillö Swimrun World Series in the Scilly Isles – a gruelling 30km trail run and 10km swim.

The duo joined forces as Team Damsels in Defence for the qualifying race for the World Championships in Sweden next month.

The event saw competitors swim in rough seas and run across the islands. With the clock ticking, they ran in their wetsuits and swam in their trainers.

“Swimrun racing is grueling at the best of times, but with the big tides, cool sea temperatures and a rugged terrain, the Scilly Ötillö race is not for the faint hearted,” said Jac.

“Training with Sam has been fantastic – her positivity and boundless energy is infectious.”

Jac, who joined the Civil Service in 1988, and is based at the Defence Academy at Shrivenham, has completed two ironman events and took part in the Norseman Xtreme Triathlon.

In 2015 she completed the inaugural ISOMAN triathlon and is now a Level 2 Triathlon coach dabbling in quadrathlon (kayaking is the fourth event).

Sam, a Lt Cdr in the RN, who has been a keen sportswoman all her life, is a qualified master scuba diver trainer and Level 2 Triathlon coach.

Sam joined her brother in 2014 to take on the mammoth Swimrun World Championship Ötillö, and missed the final cut-off by a very small margin.

The pair completed this year’s Scilly event in seven hours, 58 minutes and ten seconds and are looking forward to their next challenge.



● **Samantha Truelove and Jacqueline Davies cross the finish line in the Scilly Isles**

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Cuff love from submariner's family firm

WHEN her husband had to design and commission dedicated HMS Talent cufflinks, it sparked an idea in the mind of Sarah Heap – an idea which is now raising thousands of pounds for submariners' families and veterans.

Since setting up CQ Cufflinks to provide bespoke accessories for military personnel, more than £2,000 has been handed over to worthy causes; for each order of 50 cufflinks, Sarah makes a donation to a charity of the customer's choice.

The small family firm is also working hand-in-hand with We Remember Submariners – a not-for-profit organisation created in 2011 after the murder of Lt Cdr Ian Molyneux aboard HMS Ambush.

It asked if CQ could provide Cufflinks depicting a poppy and a RN Submarine Badge – which it did – along with ties and lapel pins. All the profit from these sales was split between We Remember Submariners and The Royal British Legion.

Since then other branches of the RN, RM, Army and RAF have asked if CQ could produce similar remembrance cufflinks showing the poppy and other crests/badges. New remembrance cufflinks, tie slides and lapel pin designs are available to pre-order via the website.

Current remembrance designs include: Surface Flotilla, Marine Engineer (Stoker), Royal Marine Commando, Fleet Air Arm Wings, Observer Wings, Air Crew, WRNS, British Army and RAF: 75 per cent of profits from RBL items go directly to the Legion.

You can see the full range of wares at www.cqcufflinks.co.uk.

Commandos give weeds the bootie

SIXTEEN green berets from Faslane turned green fingered when they spent the day helping to renovate the garden of a local children's hospice.

The marines from 43 Commando Fleet Protection Group lent their considerable muscle power to clearing some of the two-acre gardens around Robin House in Balloch.

The garden is a focal point for the children and families, allowing them to get out in the open, by bed and wheelchair access, enjoying views of Loch Lomond.

Under the watchful eye of gardener Maggie Brown, the commandos got stuck in to a stream which needed some serious weeding attention.

WO2 Rab Murray, a Royal Navy and Royal Marines welfare officer who organised the event, said: "It has been a great day out with a chance to make a real difference for a worthwhile cause."

Sgt Tom Blacklock from 43 Commando's Motor Transport Troop continued: "When the Regimental Sergeant Major asked me to head this up I thought it was going to be a back-breaking day. But it has actually been a great opportunity to get out with my lads and do something different.

"The job is never done and 43 Commando hope to support the hospice again in the near future."



Showtime at Sultan

IT MIGHT be billed as simply a summer show, but HMS Sultan's fundraising spectacular manages to pull in the punters over three action-packed days.

Most of the 20,000-plus attendees turn up on the Saturday or Sunday, which this year coincided with Father's Day.

But a special group is routinely invited in before the noise and bustle of the big crowds.

HMS Sultan welcomed over 2,000 disabled and deserving children for a special evening of entertainment at the Summer Show's Children's Party.

This invitation-only event has been held by the establishment for more than ten years, with children invited through various charities.

It remains the only event where sailors are given permission to dress as pirates, as the children in attendance enjoy some swashbuckling fun.

Packed full of live entertainment throughout, the party included a display by the Festival Circus, a fun and games arena, air frames, and a steam fair.

In addition, children were treated to free rides throughout the evening on Peter Burnett's funfair.

Capt Trevor Gulley, the Commanding Officer of HMS Sultan, said: "The children's party is a fantastic event which is a real treat for so many young people."

"There are plenty of activities on offer for all our guests to enjoy and our sailors, dressed as pirates, have been going around helping the children and their families."

"For many of our disabled guests here today, attending events with busy crowds is a very stressful experience, not only for them but also their families."

"The children's party provides a safe environment where the children are free to express themselves."

The Summer Show itself did indeed feature busy crowds, as well as a barrage of attractions to keep everybody happy.

Among the big draws in the main show arena were the gigantic roaring Monster Trucks display and the stunts of the Bolddog Lings motorcycle display team.

In addition Bob Hogg's Sheepdog Displays and the Lamb National – as seen on BBC TV's *Countryfile* – offered an interactive display for all ages.

In keeping with the best of military traditions, HMS Sultan's Ceremonial Guard marked the establishment's 60th anniversary with a specially-created marching display.



● (Above) Two-year-old Terrianne is fascinated by mechanical doll at the HMS Sultan Summer Show's Children's Party while Bolddog Lings motorcyclists (below) drew big crowds to the main arena, more traditional stalls like Soak a Sailor and hurling a tennis ball into a bucket – as attempted by this youngster, right – proved as popular as ever

In the Big Top, the Festival Circus provided impressive acts ranging from acrobatics to the clowns.

As an extra, visitors were given an opportunity to pick up hints and tips from the professionals in a number of circus skills workshops.

Out on the wider showgrounds there was an eclectic mix of stalls, displays and exhibitions for visitors, with activities ranging from a parade of classic cars and the steam fair through to petting zoos, mobile caving and classic stalls like Soak a Sailor.

Throughout the weekend local cadets competed in a field gun competition, and in drawing the event towards a close the HMS Sultan Volunteer Band performed Beat Retreat and Ceremonial Sunset in the Main Arena – before the Monster Trucks roared into life once more to the delight of the petrolheads.



Pictures: LPhoto Sean Gascoigne



Remembering the Somme

SAILORS, soldiers, civic leaders and the youth of Plymouth gathered to honour the dead of the Somme on the 100th anniversary of the battle's beginning.

The Naval Memorial on the Hoe was the setting for the centenary commemoration, led by the gunners of 29 Commando Regiment whose predecessors fought in the four-month battle – as did sailors and Royal Marines; the Royal Naval Division was committed in the final stages of the Somme offensive – the Battle of the Ancre in November 1916.

It lost three officers and 53 men killed every day – some 4,000 dead and wounded by the time the battle ended.

The ceremony opened with a whistle heralding gunfire in the trenches, represented by rifle fire and a gun salute from the Citadel. As gun smoke drifted across the Hoe and Naval Memorial there were two minutes' silence.

Lt Col Jon Cresswell, 29 Regiment's Commanding Officer, said the Somme cast a long shadow over both the Army and the nation, wiping out "the flower of a generation".

■ Two hundred miles away in rural Kent, more than 250 pupils and staff from Saint Ronans School, Hawkhurst, attended a series of commemorative activities which culminated with a drumhead service to remember not only those who fought in the battle but also those from more recent conflicts.

The day began with a number of educational activities sponsored by Royal Marines Band Portsmouth and 1 Royal School of Military Engineering Regiment Royal Engineers comparing life of a soldier in 1916 with that of today, followed by a presentation on the historical context of the battle itself and finally the service.

Shaman cure for Naval intelligence

FIRST Sea Lord Admiral Sir Philip Jones performed the honours when the new intelligence trainer was opened at the Fleet Intelligence Centre in Collingwood.

Project Shaman is set to considerably enhance the Fleet's war fighting capability from next year, particularly in the realm of force protection.

Shaman will be an essential Information Surveillance Targeting and Reconnaissance (ISTAR) asset – not just assisting front-line units, but also helping to raise the RN's standing with its intelligence partners around the globe.

Admiral Jones met some 20 UK and US personnel and civilians involved with the project before formally declaring the Shaman operator and maintainer training facilities open.



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THE JOURNEY DOES NOT HAVE TO END!

New app boosts safety

THE Marine Society College are adding to their award-winning suite of @Sea online programmes with English@Sea, introducing seafarers to the English language to boost safety at sea.

Shipping is a global community that can only benefit from sharing a common language when it comes to safety.

The new English@Sea programme and phone app, developed by the Marine Society College, has been created with seafarers in mind, using nautical-themed examples, quizzes, imagery and language.

English@Sea will develop seafarers' English language skills, such as teaching key vocabulary, times of the day and numbers.

Mark Windsor, Director of Lifelong Learning at the Marine Society College, said: "We are very proud to add to our award winning suite of @Sea programmes with English@Sea.

"Being at sea can be a lonely place, especially if you don't understand the common language, and we hope this online programme will bring seafarers together to work safely."

When working at sea there is limited internet connection.

To counter this, once the English@Sea phone app is downloaded using wifi, seafarers can use the app offline to learn in their spare time.

The course is authored by specialist tutors with a wealth of experience in maritime education.

It's hosted and promoted by the Marine Society College, which aims to give seafarers the best possible lifelong learning opportunities tailored to their individual needs.

The course costs £15 and can be purchased from the Marine Society Shop – go to www.marinesocietyshop.org

Shortly before the launch of the latest app, the Marine Society's @Sea online programmes won the 'Investment in People' category at the prestigious Seatrade Awards.

The Seatrade Awards, chaired by International Maritime Organization (IMO) Secretary-General Kitack Lim and held at London's Guildhall, celebrates the maritime and shipping industry's successes and innovations.

www.marine-society.org

Staying shipshape and bristle fashion

IT'S bad news for Royal Navy hipsters – that fashionably-luxurious beard will have to go...

The Senior Service's personnel department has issued a memorandum to "clarify and reinforce current policy on beards and facial hair within the Naval Service" – and there is no comfort for the designer stubble brigade either.

By way of background, the memorandum (RNTM 222/16) notes that over the past decade numerous trends have emerged as fashions wax and wane, often promoted and advocated by celebrities and sports stars.

These role models are mimicked, and "the young male sailor or marine understandably feels a need to follow fashion."

"However, the oft-cited ambiguous restrictions of

current regulations have led to a gradual increase in 'pushing the boundaries' of that which is acceptable."

Previous guidelines have provided room for interpretation, so this memorandum "aspires to make the rules clear and unequivocal and not provide temptation to the modern Serviceman who may feel the urge to 'test the system' by growing an inappropriate beard or facial hair."

The memorandum also acknowledges "societal trends and norms" and endeavours to keep pace with these changes while honouring and maintaining long-held standards.

So some elements of the guidance remain unchanged, with reference to hair and sideburns.

Hair "shall be neatly groomed; taper trimmed at the back, sides and above the ears to blend with

the hairstyle.

"On the top of the head it shall be no more than 15 cm in length and sufficiently short at the front and sides that when the hair is groomed and head dress removed, no hair shall touch the ears or fall below the tops of the eyebrows."

"It shall be kept above the shirt collar." (BR 3(1) 3818.a refers).

At the other end of the scale, "excessively short hair can detract from a smart and well-groomed appearance, however, it may be permitted at the discretion of the Commanding Officer."

Sideburns "shall not extend below the ear lobe, shall be of even width, and shall be taper trimmed and squared off to conform to the overall hair style."

"Sideburns for RM personnel shall not extend below halfway down the ear." (BR 3(1) 3818.c).

Advice on beards has been amended and will be included in

the next change to BR 3(1).

"Beards and moustaches shall be kept neatly trimmed especially, in the case of beards, at the lower neck and cheekbones."

The memorandum allows the Command and delegated representatives to define an "acceptable appearance of a beard as much depends on the features of the individual."

It does offer a guide as to the unacceptable, and the following are frowned upon:

"(1) Designer stubble. Designer stubble is assessed as any beard length shorter than Grade 1 (2.5mm).

"(2) Beards that are not of even growth (eg 'scrappy'). This remains within the subjective judgment of the Command (and delegated representatives, namely the Executive Dept and all personnel in positions of authority (LH/LCpl and above)).

"(3) Extended or 'hipster' beards are not appropriate. The maximum acceptable length (or depth at any point perpendicular from the face) of a beard is to be Grade 8 (25.5mm).

"(4) Beards taking an excessive amount of time to grow. This remains within the subjective judgment of the Command (and delegated authorities).

"The advised maximum time for an individual to grow a sufficiently thorough beard is two weeks.

"(5) Where facial hair is grown as a tenet of a faith by a genuine adherence to that faith, it may be grown in excess of the limit described above at paragraph (3).

"Such facial hair may have to be trimmed, tied up or removed if it undermines the health and safety of the wearer or others in the unit, or if it undermines the operational effectiveness of the unit."

BR3(1) (Book of Reference) explains further: "When the safety of an individual might be jeopardised by his beard or moustache, such as in the wearing of oxygen or gas masks, it shall be modified in such a fashion as to accommodate the type of equipment to be worn."

Hopefully there is sufficient discretion to ensure the survival of charity beard-growing competitions on long deployments...



● From left, Amy Perryman, Tariq Ismail, of the Smallpeice Trust, and Hannah Whitcomb

The nuclear option

HMS SULTAN welcomed some of the brightest youngsters in the country as they learnt about nuclear marine engineering within the Royal Navy.

The Nuclear Marine Engineering course, hosted by HMS Sultan and HMS Excellent in conjunction with the Smallpeice Trust, saw 48 children from across the UK spend four days in the Portsmouth area.

The Trust, which celebrates its 50th anniversary this year, is a charity set up by engineer Dr Cosby Smallpeice to inspire youngsters and ensure they have every opportunity to explore their passion for science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

Throughout the course, the children learnt about life in the Royal Navy, taking in a number of interactive tours and activities within establishments, and also visiting local attractions including Action Stations within Portsmouth Historic Dockyard.

They also spent several nights living onboard harbour training ship HMS Bristol.

While at Sultan, the home of the Defence School of Marine Engineering and the RN Air Engineering and Survival School, the children toured the marine and air engineering facilities, and completed an activity which involved wiring up and soldering a speaker and amplifier kit into a cereal packet.

Course co-ordinator Lt Paul Mulroy said: "The kids on the course are very receptive and intelligent and it's been a pleasure to have them with us for the week."

"They have been living onboard Bristol for the week and the course is a great opportunity for them to be immersed in the RN way of life and also affords them a vision of what we get up to as engineers."



Jobs for the buoy

IN the cold grey wastes of the Atlantic, some 300 miles southwest of the tip of Ireland, sailors from HMS Scott repair a buoy which helps scientists study the effects of climate change on the oceans.

The team on the Royal Navy's largest survey ship were asked to help experts from the National Oceanography Centre in Southampton with a scientific buoy over the Porcupine Abyssal Plain – named not for the mammal, but for an RN survey ship which discovered the plateau 150 years ago.

The centre receives daily data from buoys measuring CO2 levels, acidity, the concentrations of phytoplankton and nutrients.

Analysis helps them to understand climate change and its possible impact on marine life.

Having located the buoy Scott's LS(Sea) 'Nick'

Senese and AB(HM) 'Jake' Whittlesea had to jump aboard the bobbing, swaying object in challenging conditions (pictured above), fit a beacon, and then test it with the help of Prof Richard Lampitt from the oceanography centre.

"This was an enjoyable challenge outside Scott's normal routine," said CO Cdr Karen Dalton-Fyfe.

"Versatility and adaptability is core to our business. It is this ability, and the determination of my crew, that sets us and the RN apart in being world leaders in Naval operations and enables us to excel when challenged."

Her sailors also recovered a second scientific buoy which had been drifting. Scott has now resumed more regular surveying duties on a 33-day North Atlantic patrol.

Rising to the challenge

HOT on the heels of the Seniors Challenge, HMS Collingwood hosted the annual Junior Leaders Field Gun competition.

The event is similar to the RNRMC Field Gun contest, but is predominantly for those aged 16-24, who have either recently joined the Armed Forces or are studying at college.

In addition to Forces crews, teams competed from the Prince's Trust at Highbury College, Fareham Colleges, Chichester College, Sea Cadet units and University Technical Colleges (UTCs).



Building on the idea of 'The Team Works', and emphasising the training theme, teams came into the competition with little or no prior experience of field gun, and only had one week to train, with the finals taking place in front of friends, family and personnel from the base.

With 17 crews taking part this year the audience had three finals to enjoy – Plate 2 was won by UTC Bristol, Plate 1 saw the home team, Victory Squadron, taking the honours, and the main final was won by SMQ North team from HMS Neptune.

Third place in the main final was HMS Sultan, who were permitted to have 33-year-old ET Owen Harris, in their crew by special dispensation.

Having joined the Navy recently, he said: "It has been an amazing experience. I've loved the whole week."

"We've really bonded together as a group and it has been a learning curve."

Organiser WO Glen Young said: "It's amazing to see what happens when you train young people like this and witness the strong camaraderie among them by the time it gets to the final day."

"Each and every one of them has been excellent and has put their heart and soul into the training."

"They go through about every emotion you can think of when they're pushing that gun up and down across the field."

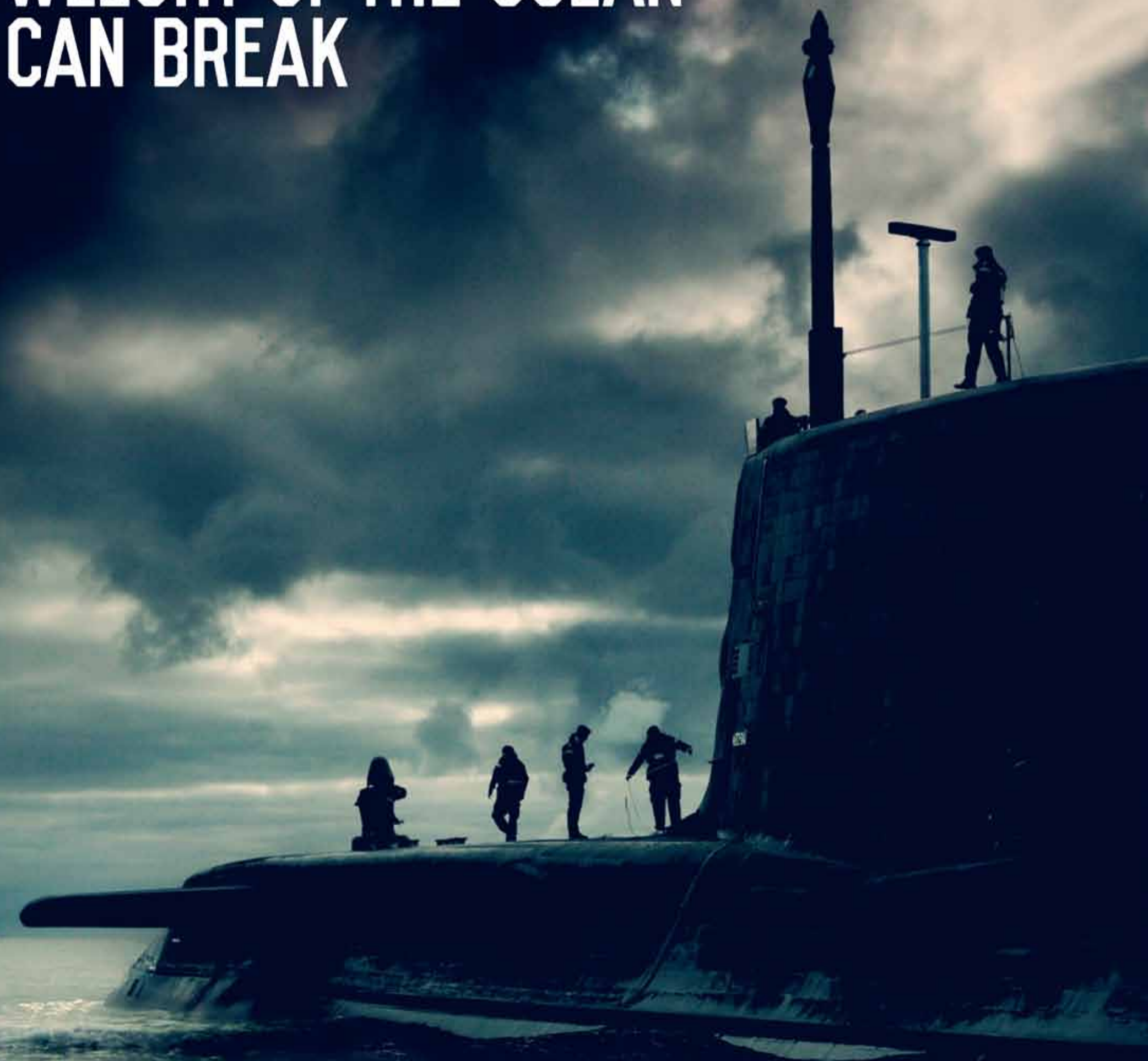
● (Left) Home team Victory Squadron, Plate 1 final winners

● (Right) The Prince's Trust team from Highbury College

Pictures: Keith Woodland



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Marine Matt turns into a midwife

ROYAL MARINES Sergeant Matt Harness cradles his son Spencer in the car park of the Waggon and Horses public house in rural Lincolnshire – the very spot where the reservist delivered him.

The full-time firefighter and spare-time Commando turned midwife when he ran out of time on a late-night dash to the maternity ward in Lincoln – and was forced to deliver the baby himself.

The drama began when he and his partner Kaylee visited the labour ward in Lincoln when her contractions started.

A midwife's examination agreed – but decided the baby's appearance probably wasn't imminent; the couple's first child, Austin, had only made his debut after a 28-hour labour.

So Matt and Kaylee returned home to the village of Tattershall, 16 miles away.

"Mistake," says Matt bluntly. "No sooner were we home than Kaylee's waters broke and we were back in the car heading back to hospital."

Four miles from their destination, they pulled into the car park of the Waggon and

Horses in the village of Branstion where an ambulance would meet them, while midwives had warned the pub's landlord to have towels at the ready – which he did.

"The plan was to help Kaylee out of the car and into the pub lounge – hopefully the ambulance would arrive soon after," said Matt. "Before we had chance to do this, Kaylee screamed: 'He's coming now!'"

"All I needed to do was to catch him before he fell into the foot well! I'm no natural with a rugby ball, but on this occasion I'm pleased to say I held on!"

Matt, who serves with Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service by day, has spent 17 years as a Royal Marines Reservist with the Nottingham detachment of RMR Merseyside.

He's completed tours of duty in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as undergone training exercises in Norway, the USA, Brunei and Jamaica.

"My three other children Austin, Luke and Lilli are chuffed to bits with their new little brother," said Matt. "And the car upholstery has been scrubbed – a lot!"

Murally virtuous

A MURAL commemorating the 350-year history of the Royal Marines has been unveiled at Wandsworth Barracks, home of London's Royal Marines Reserves.

The artwork was produced by 14 A-level students from nearby Southfields Academy.

Each student researched the history of the Corps before designing and producing a panel depicting a significant event, including Waterloo, both World Wars, the Korean War, the Gulf War, Kosovo and Afghanistan.

The mural was commissioned by the CO of RMR London, Lt Col Ed Moorhouse, himself once an A-level arts student.

"These students have really impressed us with the depth of their research and understanding of the Royal Marines history," said Lt Col Moorhouse.

"Artistically they've really turned things upside down in terms of military art; while each panel is one student's concept they also complement each other perfectly.

"There is a long tradition of art reflecting military life and I am proud to have this latest addition



● MP Justine Greening views the new murals at RMR London

hanging in the Royal Marines Reserve Wandsworth Barracks."

Teacher Numo Reis, who supervised the project, said: "This has been a great opportunity to bring the work of Southfields Academy into a new environment.

"I believe this project will open doors for our students in the future – after all if you can deliver for the Royal Marines you can deliver for anyone."

The mural was officially unveiled by local MP Justine Greening, who told the students they should be immensely proud of their work.

"The paintings are so fantastic and so thoughtful I've been blown away," said the MP.

"They show the Royal Marines' history is not just about war and conflict but also about keeping the peace."

Five more years of good service

A MEMBER of HMS Sherwood has been rewarded for his long service.

AB 'Dickie' Dyke, 51, received his award at Sherwood's annual Ceremonial Divisions.

The event saw reservists from the East Midlands unit parade in front of Inspecting Officer Col Jeff Moulton RMR, Deputy Commander Maritime Reserves, watched by civic guests, friends

and family members.

AB Dyke received the 2nd Bar to the Volunteer Reserve Service Medal, marking a further five years of good service – bringing his total career in the Royal Naval Reserve to more than 20 years.

Lt Cdr 'Hattie' Jacques, RN Staff Officer at Sherwood, said: "The event was an opportunity for the ship's company to display their pride in their service as well as their overall professionalism.

"The reservists' families and employers in attendance were also thanked for their continued support.

"Reservists often show great commitment to their training, which is needed to maintain and develop their skills, so they can be deployed on operations.

"To serve for over 20 years is a significant achievement.

"We are delighted to have been able to honour AB Dyke, and would like to thank him for his continued hard work and dedication to HMS Sherwood."

Déjà vu for Craig

A MIDLANDS reservist has successfully completed his Initial Naval Training – 17 years after leaving the Royal Navy...

AB Craig Wagstaff rejoined as a reservist a year ago as he wanted a new challenge and felt he could pass on his warfare trade skills to colleagues at HMS Sherwood.

Craig, 45, has now completed his Initial Naval Training in 11 months, attending HMS Raleigh where he won the Captain's Prize for best performance.

Craig's 'day job' is with the Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service, and he says he could not have realised his ambitions without their support.

Craig said: "When I rejoined

the Royal Navy in June 2015 after an absence of 17 years I was unsure what to expect.

"However, with the help and support of the ship's company at HMS Sherwood and the excellent instruction of the initial training team staff I quickly settled in to my new reservist role.

"I got myself back up to speed, completing my Phase One training in less than a year from joining.

"I consider myself extremely fortunate to be given the opportunity to serve my country once more, and to be able to do this alongside serving with Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service – something I am extremely proud of."

New memorial dedicated to reservists from Merseyside



MEMBERS of the RNR Officers' Club Liverpool stand by a new memorial plaque at the National Arboretum.

President Lt Cdr Brian Williams joined personnel and their families at a service of dedication of the plaque which records members of Mersey Division RNR.

The plaque and a tree were commissioned by the club with the plaque carrying the inscription:

This plaque and tree are dedicated to all members of Mersey Division of the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve and Royal Naval Reserve who have served, are serving, or will serve their country in the future.

Members of the Division formed Howe Battalion as part of the Royal Naval Division who served with distinction at Gallipoli and in France

and Flanders during WW1.

During WW2 HMS Eaglet was commissioned as the Base Ship Liverpool and flew the flag of the Commander in Chief Western Approaches, instrumental in the ultimate success of the Battle of the Atlantic.

To the memory of the fallen and the future of the living we give thanks.

The service was conducted by the chaplain, Rev John Williams, supported by the Sutton Coldfield Sea Cadet Band, who provided a superb musical repertoire and static drumming display for the event as well as the bugler for the Last Post and Reveille.


Should anyone wish to see the plaque on their next visit, it is in the Cherry Tree Avenue next to the Armed Services Wood.

OUR IMPACT

IN 2015

**SUPPORTING OUR SAILORS,
MARINES, AND THEIR FAMILIES,
FOR LIFE.**

Our tweets were seen by



2 Million people

We provided

11 families

with a financial
lifeline
after the
loss
of a
loved
one



Our biggest social media fans come from

1. London
2. Plymouth
3. Portsmouth
4. Southampton
5. Manchester



Those who took part in
our **Road to Twickenham**
challenge covered a total
distance equal to scaling
Mount Everest **149 times!**



£2.4 Million

to 28 charities to
support serving
and former Naval
Service personnel
and their families

We supplied

2000 folding boards



To new recruits at HMS Raleigh

For every £1

received




92p is spent
on charitable
activities

8p is spent
on running
the charity

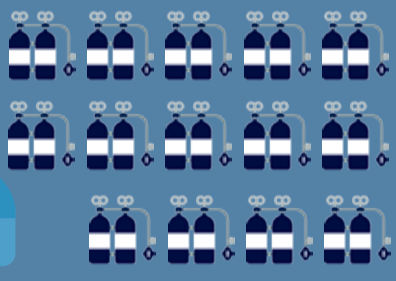
Top Moments

We received
£4m of
LIBOR funding
in January

14 Royal Navy Divers

'Ran' 26 miles underwater
in kit weighing 40kg in an
attempt to raise £5,000 for
The RNRMC!



**HRH The Princess Royal
visits RNRMC**
in September



20% Increase
in active
volunteers





D-Day challenge

SAILORS from HMS Atherstone cycled 84 miles to honour the fall of D-Day.

The team of 13, clad in cycling jerseys donated by the Royal British Legion, visited four of the five beaches in Normandy – Sword, Gold, Juno and Omaha.

The minihunter's bosun PO Gary Belcher, who came up with the idea, said being in Caen for the 72nd anniversary of the landings was the ideal time to complete the challenge.

"I didn't think many people would be up for 84 hard miles of cycling through the Normandy countryside but after putting the idea out, we had quite a bit of interest, and compared to

the sacrifices made by all those individuals 72 years ago to ensure our freedom it kind of pales into insignificance," he said.

Sub Lt Jon Davies said: "We stopped at every memorial along the way we came across."

"The scale of the loss and some of the human endeavour was truly humbling."

Perhaps the most touching moment of the journey was the opportunity to meet 93-year-old Sapper Ted Young RE (pictured above), a D-Day veteran of Juno Beach, who was visiting all the beaches with his family.

The cycle ride was completed in ten hours and raised more than £1,300 for the RBL.

Voyage to starboard



A TEAM of 38 military veterans, many with little or no sailing experience, had passed the half-way mark in a gruelling 2,000-mile sailing expedition around Britain as *Navy News* went to press.

Three crews set sail from Falmouth on June 1 on the Spirit of Falmouth (above) and two support yachts on the Turn to Starboard Round Britain Challenge, and despite gearbox problems the ship passed Stornoway to complete 1,000 miles.

The eight-week voyage aims to help participants gain new skills while raising awareness of the challenges some veterans face after leaving the military.

Turn to Starboard has helped hundreds of military personnel suffering with physical injuries or mental trauma by providing sailing courses and family sailing trips in a supportive environment.

The charity is inviting the public to help them raise £20,000 towards supporting injured veterans by buying a mile of the expedition for £10 at www.turntostarboard.co.uk/round-britain-challenge-2016/



French connection

TEN Royal Navy sailors – mostly from BRNC – and ten French comrades retraced the route the Allies took for the D-Day landings and the liberation of Paris.

The group left the Naval Service Recovery Centre, the Help for Heroes-funded facility at HMS Drake in Plymouth, on a five-day challenge that saw them ride over 750km to raise money for the Help for Heroes charity and the French equivalent, AD Augusta, while also strengthening the close bonds and mutual interests of both navies.

The challenge has been organised by friends Lt Cdr Gary Mills (BRNC) and Lt Cdr Colin

Castle, the RN's representative in Brest, France, and two of his colleagues WO Olivier Guenezen and Senior CPO Sylvain Frapper of the *Marine Nationale*.

The group visited memorials en route, arriving in Caen 72 years to the day after the landings took place, and joined veterans for a service of remembrance at the British and Commonwealth Cemetery, Bayeux.

They then toured the Normandy beaches, finishing with a ride down the Champs-Élysées and a reception at the British Embassy.

www.facebook.com/FRUK2016navalcyclingchallenge

Rallying round in aid of SSAFA

SERVICE personnel and veterans from the Royal Navy, Army and RAF are preparing to tackle a challenging eight-day drive across Europe alongside civilians from all walks of life, in memory of those killed in Afghanistan and to raise £100,000 for SSAFA, the Armed Forces charity.

United by a love of cars and a desire to support the Forces, 120 people in 60 vehicles will drive 3,000 miles across Europe in the Rally for Heroes – a biennial event that's been raising money for Forces charities since 2010.

This year's rally leaves from Portsmouth Historic Dockyard at 10am on Friday August 5, when ex-RAF pilot and England rugby veteran Rory Underwood will drop the flag by HMS Victory.

The rally will follow a clockwise route, taking in Brussels, Basel and Turin, with a stop-over at the site of the old Fiat factory featured in *The Italian Job*.

Then on to Monaco, Girona (where the TV hit drama *Game of Thrones* is filmed) and across the Pyrenees to finish in Le Mans.

Rally for Heroes Director, Army Sgt Mick Clark, came up with the idea whilst serving in Afghanistan in 2010.

What started as an idea for a post-operational tour lad's weekend soon gained traction as a fundraising event.

In partnership with fellow Director Army WO2 Benn Laidler, Rally for Heroes has gone



● Cdr Steve Shaw on the start line of the Rally for Heroes, alongside rally mascot Roary the Lion
Picture: L(Phot) Kyle Heller

from strength to strength, raising in excess of £300,000 for SSAFA, the RBL and Help for Heroes.

Mick remains a key player running the event alongside fellow directors Cdr Steve Shaw, based at Navy Command HQ, and WO Laidler.

Cdr Shaw said: "This is the third event I have been involved with and we're all really looking forward to the launch."

"We are like a big family – once you have done Rally for Heroes it gets into your blood and you want to stay involved."

A specially commissioned shell case, bearing the names of those who died in the Afghanistan

campaign, will travel with the rally in memory of their sacrifice.

Cdr Shaw added: "We have held a memorial on every trip remembering all those who lost their lives in Afghanistan – it acts as a poignant reminder to us all why we're there."

"This year the Chaplain of the Fleet will hold a short service of remembrance on board HMS Victory before we leave and we will be carrying the shell case with us for the first time."

Participants cover the cost of the trip themselves meaning all funds raised go to SSAFA.

<http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/fund/rally16>

Tony's tough Brighton run



A ROYAL Navy senior rate has completed a 100km run from London to Brighton in support of Blind Veterans UK.

Tony Bennett, 37, was the joint first participant to cross the line, finishing in 14 hrs 19 mins.

Tony, serving at HMS Collingwood, decided to take on the challenge after his friend and boss asked him to get involved and support Blind Veterans UK.

Tony said: "I got back into running about seven years ago after I started outgrowing 41-inch jeans."

"I decided I needed to get fitter and wanted to try a marathon."

"I've done quite a few marathons but this is the furthest I've ever run by far."

He started in Fulham at 8.30am on Saturday, finishing over 14 hours later at the Blind Veterans UK training centre at Ovingdean.

On the way, Tony met Paul Wright, a fellow Royal Navy officer, and they started running together (pictured above right).

Tony said: "It was definitely the hardest thing I've ever done and I hit some massive low points along the way."

"If it wasn't for Paul I wouldn't have done it – I told him to run on

but he said we'd finish it together.

"We're both Navy men and it was great to see the Senior Service leading the way."

You can register your interest to take part in next year's Blind Veterans UK 100k at www.blindveterans.org.uk/100k

Tony adds: "I would recommend this event to everyone – you're so well looked after and

the sense of achievement at the end is amazing."

"I will definitely be fundraising for Blind Veterans UK again although my legs are still a bit sore to decide whether I'll run another 100k..."

You can still support Tony and his team by donating at justgiving.com/fundraising/AWW4blindvets

Tables turned on Kent CO

HMS KENT'S CO Cdr Daniel Thomas served a lavish steak dinner to six lucky members of the ship's company following an onboard raffle in support of Demelza House, the frigate's affiliated charity.

Sailors bought over £200 of tickets for the opportunity to have dinner served to them by the CO in his cabin, a prize won by Std Hannah Watson, who chose five dining companions.

Helping Cdr Thomas serve were XO Lt Cdr Rob Pearce and EWO WO1 Harry Ebdon.

Std Watson, who has previously been the captain's steward in Kent, said: "It was a little surreal at first being served by the Captain, but it was a great experience and one that I will remember for a long time."

PO Caterer Wayne Claridge, who oversees the ship's galley, returned to his roots by donning his apron to help prepare the meal.

At the end of the meal Std Watson invited the new stewarding team and PO Claridge into the CO's cabin and thanked them for their efforts.

A good week

THIS year's Blesma Week has proved a great success, with more than £50,000 being raised.

The week kicked off with around 70 riders, led by hand-cyclist and member Jonathan Bell, taking part in the Cycle Sportive Flat 'n' Fast 100 mile challenge, raising over £21,500.

Blesma, the Limbless Veterans, is the national charity for all limbless Servicemen and women, their widows and dependants.

Firm favourite

WINCANTON Racecourse will host a Combat Stress and Armed Forces raceday on Sunday October 23 – and organisers hope it will be even more successful than the 2014 event, which raised just over £50,000.

There are sponsorship opportunities around the day – see www.combatstress.org.uk/support-us/events/ for details.

Combat Stress, the veterans' mental health charity, is now supporting more than 5,900 veterans.

Action plan

A SENIOR rate and members of his family are on a voyage round Britain to raise funds for Action for Children.

PO Steve Pointon left Gosport on the first leg to Lowestoft knowing they had already passed their £10,000 target.

The project – Tikka's Travels – has spawned subsidiary challenges such as bike rides to tie in with the main event.

See 'Tikka's Travels' on Facebook, or to donate see <http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com> and search 'Tikka's Travels'.

Supporting Children

of Royal Navy and Royal Marines (serving and ex-serving) who are IN NEED, HARDSHIP or DISTRESS



The only charity dedicated to supporting children whose parents work, or who have worked in the Naval Service

Royal Navy & Royal Marines Children's Fund

Patron: Her Majesty the Queen

Charity registration No. 1160182

T: 023 9263 9534

E: mchildren@btconnect.com

www.rnrmchildrensfund.org.uk



Pictures: LA(Phot) Will Haigh, RNPOTY

Carrier caterers cream of crop

SOME of the best chefs and stewards in the Royal Navy competed to establish who was the *crème de la crème* of the Naval catering world.

The cook-and-serve contest was the brainchild of Cdr D J Turner of HM Naval Base Clyde's Waterfront Logistics Support Group.

Four teams consisting of two chefs and a steward were given 80 minutes and a budget of £20 to prepare, cook and serve a three-course meal for two with wine and coffee.

Assessing the teams were a panel of judges looking at creativity, workmanship, presentation and hospitality skills.

Best of class winners were the team from HMS Queen Elizabeth, the Royal Navy's new aircraft carrier.

Leading Chef Chris Mason, Chef Aaron Blunt and Std Martin Millar cooked a starter of asparagus and pancetta salad served with a crispy hen's egg and Hollandaise sauce,

pictured below.

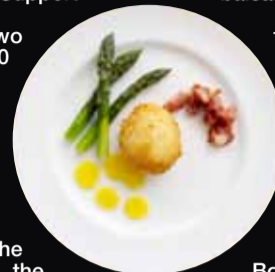
For main the team served a pork fillet roulade stuffed with nut farce wrapped in Parma ham, and to top it off dessert was raspberry crème patisserie and diced apple crumble served with balsamic macerated raspberries.

LC Mason said: "The team thoroughly enjoyed the day. We learned a lot as a team and individually about cooking under pressure. It wasn't easy working under the watchful eye of the judges."

The other teams competing were drawn from the submarine, mine hunting and Royal Marine communities across the region.

Event coordinator CPO John Boyle said: "Hopefully cook and serve will become an annual event open to all Scottish-based units in the future."

A team representing Scotland will now be selected to compete in Exercise Joint Caterer at Shrivvenham in October.



Accolade for RPO

REGULATING Petty Officer Graham Gregory has received the Mayor of Fareham's Award for his work in the local community.

The award was presented to Graham, 39, by Cllr Mike Ford at the Mayor of Fareham's Inauguration Ceremony held at the Ferneham Hall.

Graham gave his personal time to visit a number of nurseries within the local community to raise road-safety awareness and to allow the children to interact with personnel working within the Services.

He led the team who used police vehicles and sirens, fingerprinting and practical demonstrations to raise awareness of the children to safe road crossing.

Drawing on his experience with the Hampshire Roads Policing Unit, Graham compiled interactive packs of information designed to help identify some of the dangers that they may come across on the roads, which the children could complete.

Graham regularly instructs sailing to children, young adults and cadets at weekends and an annual week long camp.

"I was very humbled and surprised to receive such recognition," he said. "Being given the opportunity to contribute to the safety and education of children and young adults in the community is a huge honour for me and is something that I aim to continue in the future and try to help as many people as I can."

Accolade for Donna

A CHIEF Petty Officer Physical Training Instructor serving at RNAS Culdrose has been highly commended for her work in training future Royal Navy PTIs.

CPO PTI Donna Chapman attended a ceremony at HMS Collingwood where Flag Officer Sea Training Rear Admiral John Clink presented her with a FOST Commendation.

Donna served at the Royal Navy School of Physical Training (RNSPT) at HMS Temeraire in Portsmouth, where she was the first ever female No1 instructor in the RNSPT's 127-year history.

As the Petty Officer in charge she was responsible for putting students through their paces on the gruelling six-month course.

"I had my heart set on this role ever since I became a Navy PTI in 2008," said Donna.

"Becoming No1 instructor is often considered the pinnacle role as a PO within the PT branch. It was hard work but extremely rewarding."

Ron buzzing about time with Hornets

AN Air Engineer who served at RNAS Culdrose more than 68 years ago retraced his footsteps on a nostalgic visit to the Cornish base.

Air Electrician Ron Dennis joined Culdrose in 1949 and worked for much of his time on 809 NAS, who at the time was flying the Sea Hornet NF21, a specially-adapted aircraft developed for night flying.

The squadron was unique in being the only Sea Hornet front-line squadron and its eight aircraft were named after Snow White and the seven dwarfs.

"Generally she had a fairly good maintenance record, they were good aircraft to work on, despite having to wire-lock most of the panels before flying," said Ron.

"It was busy at Culdrose then, with many aircraft flying all day and night, everywhere you looked the sky was full of planes."

Ron also remembers how new the air station was in 1949. Culdrose commissioned less than two years before he joined and not everything went smoothly.

"One of our Sea Hornets had started up, but the brakes failed and it careered off towards another squadron."

"Their hangar doors finally stopped it, but it wasn't a pretty sight."

Showing Ron and his wife Maureen around their 736 NAS Hawk jet were Senior Pilot Lt Cdr Nick Mattock and Lt Matt Palmer, who listened attentively to Ron's recollections from the early days at Culdrose.

"I never thought I'd be standing back on this patch of concrete again."

"We've holidayed in Cornwall many times since I was based here and it's great to come back, especially as this is the same hangar and dispersal where I'd worked on those 809 Sea Hornets back in the early 1950s."

After Culdrose, Ron and his family moved to RNAS Hal Far in Malta, where he worked on the aircraft that supported the Royal Navy's fleet of large aircraft carriers in the Mediterranean.

However, Ron has special memories of his days at RNAS Culdrose.

"The air station has changed a lot since I was last here, but the lay-out and the hangars are familiar."



● Ron Dennis is shown the cockpit of a Hawk by Lt Matt Palmer

Pictures:PO(Phot) Paul A'Barrow



● Ron in his RN uniform in the 1950s; Right: Sea Hornets from 809 NAS; Below right: Ron and Maureen with Lt Cdr Nick Mattock and Lt Matt Palmer



"Some things that don't change though are the views; they are still as wonderful as I remember looking out towards the sea and across the Cornish countryside."

809 NAS, whose motto is simply 'Immortal', is to be reformed to operate the fifth-generation stealth aircraft the Lightning II F35-B that will fly from the Royal Navy's Queen Elizabeth-class carriers from 2018.



● CPO Sharkey Ward with his grandson Lewis Buckley

Welcome to the best family in the world

A ROYAL Navy CPO is as proud as Punch that his grandson has followed in his footsteps and signed up for a career in the Senior Service.

CPO Alan 'Sharkey' Ward joined the RN in July 1977 and is currently serving at Phoenix Damage Control School in Portsmouth.

His 17-year-old grandson, Engineering Technician Lewis Buckley, has completed his basic training at HMS Raleigh and is now learning his trade as a marine engineer at HMS Sultan.

CPO Ward said: "I'm absolutely proud as Punch that Lewis has joined up. He's now become part of the biggest and best family in the world. I've been keeping my eye on him from a distance. I'd never want to interfere with his career."

Approaching 40 years' service, CPO Ward believes he is the longest serving member of the marine engineering branch, having served in 14 ships including HMS Herald during the Falklands campaign in 1982.

"I told Lewis when you get to Sultan, the base for engineering training, I'll know 95 per cent of the people serving there and the other five per cent will know me. Before he joined I told him to get fit and to be a marine engineering technician and nothing else. I'd ultimately like to see him serving on minesweepers because I think it'll make him a better engineer."

Lewis, a former pupil of Solway Community Technology College in Cumbria, said: "I knew the Royal Navy would be a good career but speaking to my granddad I was shown how much the Navy could do for you and that it was a job I wanted to do."

Highlight of career

TWO Sub Lieutenants from HMS Collingwood took advantage of the Royal Navy's Merchant Navy Liaison Voyage Scheme.

Alex Snow and Mark Walker joined Geest Line's MV Agulhas Stream on a voyage which took them across the Caribbean, visiting places such as St Lucia, Martinique and Antigua.

Met by Geest Line's Port Operations Manager, former Lt Cdr Vince Noyce, the officers were given a comprehensive view of the ship's programme, how the ship ran and how the company operated.

Their first port of call was Le Havre where they witnessed for the first time the frantic pace of container operations as four vast cranes loaded and unloaded as many containers as quickly as possible.

For the next part of their journey as they began to cross the Atlantic, the officers familiarised themselves with the sextant and astro publications on board and got around the ship, talking to crew and performing safety rounds.

Sub Lt Walker said: "We'd like to give special thanks to the MNLV staff, Vince Noyce and Master Jose Trimanez. We learnt a great deal and had a very enjoyable time – a career highlight."



Hanging out with Dad

NOW this is what we call a 'fathers and sons at work' day: hanging out with the folks at HMS Raleigh.

Green berets from 30 Commando IX Group invited their dads and sons to join them for a typical day in the Corps.

And a typical day for the chaps from RM Stonehouse involves: dashing around Plymouth Sound in ORCs, learning survival techniques, abseiling, zooming down a zip wire and a spot of marksmanship on the range.

"The fathers and sons day is an annual feature of the Commando Forces Sergeants' Mess social calendar," said WO Mark Syms.

"It is an opportunity for family and friends to have an insight into Royal Marines life and is always well supported.

"This year's event was a fantastic success and jam-packed with different events, finished off by a full regimental dinner.

"Despite its busy schedule, 30 Cdo enjoys organising and running the day – the feedback from attendees has been incredibly positive."

Pictures: PO(Phot) Dave Gallagher, 3 Cdo Bde



Future looks bright for new handlers

THE latest batch of aircraft handlers are celebrating after passing in to the Handlers Branch at a formal parade at RNAS Culdrose.

The Naval Airman Aircraft Handlers (NA AH) were presented with their certificates and awards by Commanding Officer of RNAS Culdrose, Capt Ade Orchard, who told them they were starting their Naval careers at a very important time for the Fleet Air Arm.

The new handlers, who have spent the last six months at the Royal Naval School of Flight Deck Operations, are also keen to get on with their frontline duties and join the new carriers being built for the Royal Navy.

The parade marked the completion of the final stage of their basic training, before they move on to further fire-fighting courses at Culdrose and in time their first frontline units.



● The latest batch of aircraft handlers have passed in at Culdrose

Much of their course has taken place on the fire ground at the base, where they have learned to use fire rescue equipment designed to save lives on the flight deck in the case of emergencies at sea.

They have also worked on the Royal Navy's own unique 'Dummy Deck' which is an exact replica of a real aircraft

carrier's flight deck, complete with moving Harrier jets and real Merlin helicopters.

Here they have operated with aircraft safely day and night in different landing configurations and emergency scenarios.

"The last six months on course have really been enjoyable," said NA James Rankin, 32, who worked in the film industry as

a stuntman before joining the Royal Navy.

"I live close to the base, so it's been very much like coming home. I'm looking forward to getting onto the frontline and hopefully join the Maritime Aviation Support Force."

James also picked up the Special Endeavour award, given to the best Naval Airman on course.

Another Naval Airman who passed into the branch was NA Nicole Wright, 24, from Middlesbrough, who is looking forward to the great opportunities the branch has to offer.

"Most of us are staying here at Culdrose to do a domestic fire-fighting course.

"Then we could be off to America to join one of the US Navy aircraft carriers for a tour. I'm really looking forward to eventually joining HMS Queen Elizabeth, that's what I want to do, get on that big ship."

Forestry work for sailors in country

PERSONNEL from HMS Queen Elizabeth volunteered their time to go and assist at Lochore Meadows, a country park located in Fife, Scotland.

The 16 volunteers arrived at Lochore Meadows to be greeted by park ranger Dallas Seawright, from the Fife Coast and Countryside Trust.

The main team were going to be working within an outdoor hazel tree nursery, chopping up logs to be sold.

The second team were tasked to remove protective covers from a few hundred new hazel trees which were growing in some of the other plots.

Hazel can be used for making crafts such as baskets and is an excellent material for wattle, which is an older technique of making walls. The trust uses the sale of hazel as a good income for upkeep of the Loch.

Anyone whom is based up north and is interested in doing some volunteer work for the Fife Coast and Countryside Trust please email Meg.Moore@fifecountryside.co.uk



● Sailors from HMS Queen Elizabeth chop logs at Lochore Meadows



Squadron nurtures scientists of future

SCHOOLCHILDREN from Portsmouth paid a visit to 1710 Naval Air Squadron at the city's Naval base to see for themselves the kind of work that Civil Service scientists conduct in support of the Navy and the wider defence community.

1710 NAS is a centre of excellence providing specialist engineering, repair, upgrade and scientific support to Royal Navy air squadrons and military front line units on air, sea and land operations across the world.

As part of their local community outreach, the unit works with local schools to promote science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) subjects.

A group of 12 children from Meon Junior School, Portsmouth, paid a visit to 1710 NAS to experience the types of work the unit's aviation forensics team do for accident investigations and to see the laboratories they call home.

The students took part in a hands-on exercise alongside Royal Navy scientists to investigate a mock accident site and come up with a theory of what happened to the aircraft.

Scientist Matthew Easom said: "It's a great opportunity to show these schoolchildren the diverse nature of science and engineering.

"Many of them will have never had a chance to talk with a scientist and probably are used to the cartoon portrayal of the 'mad scientist' with a tube of bubbling fluid, laboratory coat and big goggles. Today they have seen a different aspect of the profession and took the opportunity to ask us many questions and enjoyed themselves."

Naval engineers from HMS Collingwood provided support to the local community at the Chemistry at Work day at Winchester Science Centre.

As ambassadors for STEM, Lt Kieran Lewis and PO Alan Bates were asked to attend the event, which they gladly did.

Lt Lewis came up with the idea of drawing on their combined explosive knowledge and they decided to conduct an interactive presentation on Naval ordnance and the chemical reactions involved in making things go bang.

PO Bates said "We structured our presentation around 3 main areas, Naval systems, how something explodes (the chemistry bit) and explosive safety/incidents.

"Yet again it was a fulfilling enterprise and allowed us to show off different aspects of our job in the RN to potential future weapon engineers."



Students leave mark

ART students show off their work carried out at HMS Collingwood's gym.

The students, studying BTEC Level 3 art and design at Fareham College, were invited to redesign an area within the base's sports and recreation centre.

The team of eight students got to work, up-scaling a tailor-made stencil of silhouette figures carrying out strength exercises alongside a quote to decorate a wall in the fitness suite. They visited the site numerous times; designing, preparing and finally installing the stencil work.

Lecturer Dale Pattenden said "The majority of this work has been down to the students, they prepared the stencilling, designed it and cut it out to install.

"We met with the staff at the centre and discussed the needs, then began collaborating as a team, considering all the constraints, surveying, quotes, health and safety.

"There were limitations with the frame attached to the wall and the ventilation units that we had to take in to consideration to make sure everything was balanced. The students have learnt a lot and have gained an insight into industry standards."

Student Phoebe Palmer said: "I've enjoyed the professionalism of this project as it's been great to have a real customer to work with; it's taught me self-discipline and the ability to work to a brief."



A few days by the sea in Whidbey...



NO, THAT'S not a mis-spelling of the popular Yorkshire resort.

We're talking Whidbey Island. USS Whidbey Island. Four-hundred-plus marines. Guns. Mortars. Bombs.

Throw 100 or so British marines into the mix, ferried aboard by the giant Sea Stallion helicopter.

US Marines invited their green beret counterparts to join them for a few days as their assault ship made its way into European waters to begin a deployment with the USS Wasp battle group.

The Whidbey Island is an assault ship – a slightly smaller version of Britain's Albion and Bulwark which uses hovercraft rather than landing craft to put up to 500 troops ashore.

In the early stages of a 12-month training regime which will see them taking over as the UK's Lead Commando Group are the men of 42 Commando. There's a good chance the lead group would be working alongside the *Semper Parati* folk in the event of a world crisis, so Juliet Company jumped at the chance of a few days of combined training off the coast of Spain.

Once aboard the Whidbey Island, the Bickleigh boys tried their hand at the Americans' martial arts training, observed amphibious assault vehicles in action, shot the M4 carbine – the US equivalent of the SA80 – and M27 service rifles (counterpart of the Royal Marines' L129A1) observed US bomb disposal technicians at work with their robot and learned about the USMC's 120mm mortar (the heaviest mortar the commandos fire is the 81mm).

"I think doing things like this increases our ability to work with each other," said 1Lt Kyle Jackson, a rifle platoon commander with Battalion Landing Team, 1st Battalion, 6th Marines. "Getting to meet and understand the Royal Marines allows us to develop a better relationship with them."

Sgt David Cuevas, an artillery section chief with 2nd Platoon Mortars, added: "We went into detail on the nomenclature and characteristics of our weapon system, allowing the Royal Marines the opportunity to get hands-on experience and a chance to learn."

The four days aboard the Whidbey Island was a short but very worthwhile experience for Juliet – especially the unarmed combat on the martial arts mat (pictured top).

"Both nations got stuck in and we all had a really good workout," said L/Cpl James Munday. "The US Marine Corps have a similar mindset to us."

L/Cpl Oliver Cleland added: "They made us feel welcome, right from the very start."

"Any time we are with our counterparts from the US, they are always taking time out of their day to make an effort for us."

Before returning to their base near Plymouth, the Brits were treated to some US Navy/USMC hospitality: a steel beach picnic: Marines. Games. Picnic. Steel beach. (It bears an uncanny resemblance to a flight deck barbecue in the RN...)

"Everyone from Juliet Company enjoyed the steel beach event," said L/Cpl Alex Johns. "It was a good atmosphere – and it was also a good way to get away from a normal working environment."

Pictures: LPhoto Joel Rouse, 3 Cdo Bde



It's easy to get on yer bike in Pompey

CYCLISTS who work in Portsmouth Naval Base now have a bike repair, sales and recycling facility on their doorstep.

The first 'Cycle Hub' has opened in HMS Nelson to help military and civilian riders, teaming up with local charity Motiv8 to meet all the requirements of the hundreds of people who bike for fun or for commuting.

The hub, which is partially funded by the Rebalancing Lives initiative, was formally opened by Team WNT professional cyclists Hannah Walker and Lydia Boylan (pictured above); they were in Portsmouth for the final leg of the Pearl Izumi tour series.

Naval Base bosses are not merely trying to encourage more of the 15,000 sailors and civilians who work in the dockyard daily to cycle to and from work, but also get back on the saddle for trips around the sprawling site (it's a mile and a half from Trafalgar to Victory Gates, or three-quarters of a mile from the Princess Royal Jetty, where the new carriers will be based, to the accommodation areas in Nelson).

Later this summer the hub will be expanding to operate a fleet of bicycles around the Naval Base along the lines of the 'Boris bikes' scheme in London.

"This initiative is designed to

encourage cycling to and from work and around the base," said XO Cdr Andy Green.

"The more people we can encourage out of their cars and onto bicycles reduces congestion both in the city and the base, reduces the need for parking spaces and, most importantly, is part of our NavyFit initiative promoting the health, fitness and wellbeing of our sailors and employees."

Charlie Adie, chief executive of Motiv8, said he was delighted the RN was embracing cycling so enthusiastically.

"We have cycle hubs in both Portsmouth and Gosport to provide a cost-effective service, recycling bikes to avoid many bikes ending up in landfill," he explained.

"Bicycling recycling is part of the youth charity which enables training and job opportunities. One such apprentice will be taken on with the cycle hub at Portsmouth Naval Base."

Although the hub is located in Nelson's Neptune Block (the central amenities building, home to the NAAFI, bar and junior rates' galley), the cycle hub will provide a service to all military personnel and their families serving/working in the Portsmouth area.

No claims rule changed

MILITARY personnel posted overseas will be able to keep their motor insurance No Claims Bonus for up to three years and not pay cancellation fees if they are posted overseas at short notice.

The commitments from the UK's biggest insurers and brokers representing 86 per cent of Britain's insurance market came into force on Armed Forces Day, and will benefit almost 265,000 people in the UK and abroad.

Hitherto, personnel deployed abroad could lose their no claims discounts when they return to the UK – resulting in experienced drivers never involved in a road traffic accident paying the same high premiums as newly-qualified drivers. They have also faced cancellation fees when posted overseas at short notice.

"I am serving overseas for three years, accompanied by my wife Kim," said Cdr Chris Franks who'd previously raised the issue.

"Before we left the UK both our motor insurers said that although we each had full no-claims discounts, they would only honour these for a maximum of two years – so on our return to the UK we would be starting from scratch and paying in full for motor insurance, despite having clean driving records."

"The news that military personnel posted overseas will in future be able to keep their no-claims bonus for up to three years as a result of an agreement with the majority of British motor insurers and many brokers is very welcome indeed – and a great example of the Armed Forces Covenant."

You can find out which insurers have signed up to this commitment at www.abi.org.uk/Insurance-and-savings/Products/Motor-insurance/Armed-forces, or call the British Insurance Brokers' Association on 0370 9501790.

Elective awards handed out

REAR Admiral John Clink – Flag Officer Sea Training – presented a host of trophies at the NETS annual Elective Learning Awards at HMS Collingwood to mark the efforts of those who'd gone above and beyond in the sphere of learning, training and education.

Receiving awards as *Navy News* went to press were:

Education and Resettlement Officer of the Year – Rev Matthew Godfrey (HMS Bulwark); Best Elective Learning Unit of the Year – RNAS Yeovilton Fire Station; Most Inspiring Achievement in Elective Learning – CPO Tobias Hunt (HMS Ocean); Use of Elective Learning to Benefit the Workplace – C/Sgt Paul Hawkins (HMS Bulwark); Top Achiever JR – MA Deborah Shaw (HMS Nelson); Top Achiever SR – CPO Russell-Stevenson (HMS Raleigh); Top Achiever OF – Lt Cdr Nicola Cripps (JFC-JIAG).

'Let's

CURRENT operations, future ships, retention and recruitment, technology and finance – all were top topics at the First Sea Lord's conference, for which the Prime Minister recorded the opening address.

More than 250 senior Naval officers, civil servants and guests from charities joined the First Sea Lord, Admiral Sir Philip Jones, and his senior team, Second Sea Lord, Vice Admiral Jonathan Woodcock, and Fleet Commander, Vice Admiral Ben Key, to discuss the present and future direction of the Naval Service.

As one of the very few occasions on which the majority of the senior leadership of the Naval Service, military and civil servants gathered, this year's conference in HMS Collingwood was designed to encourage questions, debate and discussion.

It opened with a recorded message from the then Prime Minister, David Cameron, who told the assembled delegates: "The Royal Navy is the pride of the nation and the envy of the world. Together, we'll make sure it stays that way."

First Sea Lord, Admiral Sir Philip Jones, told the conference: "After 12 weeks as First Sea Lord, it's clear to me that SDSR15 left the Royal Navy in a strong position and what we are doing on operations is increasingly recognised throughout Defence and at the highest levels of government."

"Irrespective of last week's referendum result, the Royal Navy's responsibilities have not changed, so our task now is to maintain the momentum."

"There are particular challenges in budgets and in manpower. On the latter, things are getting better, but not everywhere at the same rate, so there is still more to do. Your role is pivotal as we work through manpower recovery, maintain our commitment to current operations and introduce the Queen Elizabeth-class carriers."

"The new Navy Command Plan articulates how we are going to meet these priorities. In the longer term, Maritime Strategy 2035 articulates an ambition for a Navy that is capable of winning when fighting at scale: a proper UK Naval strategy for a maritime century."

"I want all those in leadership roles – Royal Navy, Royal Marines, RFA or Civil Service – to read and understand these documents as soon as you can. I require your buy-in and belief because I am a passionate believer in the delegated authority that comes from empowerment and understanding. I also look to you to explain to others how they fit into this plan and to lead them

Where to look

Galaxy Briefs

15-2016 – Introduction of Women into the Royal Marines (General Service)

Chilcot report (Iraq Inquiry)

See www.iraqinquiry.org.uk

RNTM

224/16 9-month Deployments – Mid-Deployment Leave Package Administration
222/16 Clarification Of Naval Service policy on beards and facial hair
212/16 Naval Service Recovery Pathway – Individual Recovery Plan Competence
207/16 Refund of Engineering Professional Body Fees

DINS

2016DIN01-102 HM Forces Railcards – Administrative Instructions
2016DIN01-108 Maritime Engineering Competence Framework
2016DIN05-020 Royal Navy Affiliation Policy

DIB

DIB2016/25 Publication of the tri-Service Reserves Continuous Attitude Survey results (RESCAS) 2016

get the job done'



● **First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Philip Jones addresses senior officers at the opening of his conference in HMS Collingwood**
Picture: LPhoto Sean Gascogine

towards our future.

"Last month I took the salute at HMS Sultan's 60th anniversary divisions, with the wonderful sight of 1,000 Naval engineers on parade. Some of those passing out will be joining our new carriers in a matter of weeks: the two largest ships in our history, and the catalyst for renewal across each of our Fighting Arms, manned by the best-trained sailors and marines in the world.

"This is what we're working for – this is the opportunity the Navy has waited generations for – and it's ours to deliver. So let's get the job done."

The Second Sea Lord said the Royal Navy was becoming much more innovative both in mindset and technology. The amazing display of futuristic technology in Leach Building on June 28 had pointed to the way to Unmanned Warrior this autumn. The Service

had appointed its first DACOS Innovation – Capt Sharon Malkin.

Admiral Woodcock said the Service was bringing in innovations in manpower and technology and supporting exciting new programmes like the University Technical Colleges, and new, well-paid, rapid entry schemes for skilled engineers.

Command Secretary Deana Rouse shared progress on the centrally (MOD) led Business Improvement Review looking at how the civilian efficiencies direction of SDSR15 could be implemented.

She explained that work was ongoing to analyse the MOD workforce on a functional basis and that TLBs needed to work together to properly benchmark their functions and share best practice.

For example, Navy Command has already done a lot of work in

the training space to ensure that we deliver high-quality training as efficiently as possible, and other TLBs will look to learn lessons from our approach. She said: "We don't know the detail of what this will mean for Navy Command yet, and work will continue over the summer with a view to formulating more concrete plans in the autumn."

Cdre Jerry Kyd, first CO of HMS Queen Elizabeth, described the hive of activity in Rosyth as the two new carriers raced towards completion. HMS Queen Elizabeth was now a working ship complete with turning engines, baking galleys, working radars and a busy ship's company.

"We now have two structurally complete super-carriers on a wide stretch of water, so I can only imagine how they will look when they are in Portsmouth Harbour," he said.

Families' round-up

IT'S been another interesting and productive couple of months here at the Naval Families Federation. Here's a round-up of some of the latest news:

Firstly, thank you to everyone who has been in touch with us regarding issues with Service Family Accommodation.

Our Director Anna Wright was called to give both written and oral evidence on behalf of families at the House of Commons Public Accounts Committee in June. The report is now available and you can read it online at www.nff.org.uk.

We have been delighted with the response to our survey on the Future of Accommodation for the Naval Service. The survey closed on July 20 – thank you to everyone who completed it – and we are collating the results. As the MOD is considering a number of proposed changes to the way accommodation will be offered to Service personnel in the future, your views and feedback are essential to helping to inform the outcome.

Our latest survey on childcare provision is now online. If you are a serving family member with children aged under 16, or over 16 and in need of continuing care, and you've had experience of MOD-sponsored childcare or civilian childcare in the UK, we would love to hear

Naval Families FEDERATION

from you.

You'll find a link to the survey on our website under the 'Your Say' tab.

On the education front, the MOD Education Support Fund is open for bids until September 30. The fund helps UK state schools to pay for initiatives which support children from Service families. Funding for projects has ranged from £600 for a small school with a few Service children, to £400,000 for a local authority bid to support 5,800 children in one county. If you want to get an application form to fill in yourself or pass on to a school, email DCYP-MOD-ESF-Mailbox@mod.uk.

We have been supporting Winchester University in their work to improve access to Higher Education for Service children, facilitating a workshop at their recent conference. Free resources are available to schools, colleges and universities to help improve their practice and outcomes from Winchester

University's website at www.winchester.ac.uk/aboutus/wideningparticipation/military-service-children.

Finally, the summer edition of *Homeport*, our free quarterly magazine, is now out.

We've got a great cover story on the Army vs Navy Twickenham match, a feature on the reality of being a Royal Marine partner, and interesting insights into what Service children think.

You can read it online via our website or to receive it free at home or your establishment, email your name and address to editor@nff.org.uk.

Please continue to contact us on 023 9265 4374 or email admin@nff.org.uk. We're going to be out and about this summer at various family days, events and homecomings so we hope to see some of you over the next couple of months.

Remember: we're here to take your feedback and ensure it is heard by decision makers, so we want to hear from you.



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PSTN: 01929 403172 MIL: 94374 3172
e-mail: navycnr-rnsrtrainingassist@mod.uk





● Cadet Caitlin, who turned 12 whilst at Thrapston, receives certificates for sailing, power boating and windsurfing from the Lord Mayor of Bradford, Cllr Geoff Reid

Bradford ceremony

BRADFORD unit cadets received reward for their efforts at a special ceremony at City Hall.

POC Charlie, aged 17, has been installed as the Lord Mayor's Cadet by Cllr Geoff Reid, who presented Charlie with his badge of office.

The Lord Mayor then went on to award a total of 35 certificates to 18 cadets following their boating week at Thrapston, near Kettering in Northamptonshire.

The Lord Mayor is also patron of Bradford unit.

POC Charlie, who recently left school, has been a cadet for five years, becoming a Petty Officer Cadet in 2015 – the highest level a cadet can achieve.

He is now the most senior cadet in the unit.

Since joining, Charlie has gained a number of qualifications in a wide range of disciplines including meteorology, piping (using the bosun's call), chart work, engineering, rope work and rigging, though his main specialisation has been catering.

Leicester's Derbyshire

LEICESTER unit have had their biannual inspection, which was carried out by Eastern Area Officer Cdr Charles Bagot-Jewitt.

Cadets displayed their skills in marine engineering, communication, navigation and seamanship throughout the evening.

Unit Commanding Officer Lt (SCC) Dave Derbyshire RNR said: "The evening was a great success, with comments from everyone on the smartness of the cadets and presentation of their many skills."

"I am very proud of the whole team."

Lt Derbyshire had another cause to be pleased – he has been presented with the Lord Lieutenant's Certificate for Meritorious Service.

He joined the unit as a cadet in 1968, rejoining after a spell in the Royal Navy.

On completing his command course in 2000 he became CO of Leicester, transferring to Loughborough for four years as an instructor before returning to Leicester in 2013.

Last year he was appointed Assistant District Officer for Leicestershire, and has done much to reach out to the local community.

Silver Wings over Hampshire

TEN students attended the Sea Cadet Aviation Silver Wing course at Lee-on-the-Solent, staying on the airfield courtesy of Portsmouth Naval Gliding Club.

Commanding Officer Sea Cadet Aviation Lt (SCC) Marc Pether RNR and the operations team, led by APO (SCC) Sophie Levy and CI Daniel Welch – who both gained their Gold Wings as cadets on earlier courses – had their work cut out fitting this year's programme of advanced navigation, meteorology, radiotelephony, engineering and

flight simulator training around school exams.

Some cadets had to leave the course to return to school and sit examinations, returning later in the week to catch up and complete the course.

Senior pilot CPO (SCC) Carl Mason had a busy time flight planning and weather watching, and ensured each cadet had at least two air experience flights during the week.

Strong crosswinds made the first day's flying interesting in the club's Grob 109B motor glider, though conditions did improve

as the week went on and only one day was lost because of poor visibility, low cloud and rain.

To make the most of the calmer weather flights began as early as 6.45am, with cadets flying out over the Isle of Wight, Portsmouth Harbour and the surrounding coastline.

The students worked hard to complete the theory tests and briefings, but all had an enjoyable week.

They were presented with their new Silver Wings badges by the CO before leaving at the end of the week.

Guernsey remembers

SENIOR cadets from Guernsey unit marched in a parade to mark May 9 – Liberation Day – in the Channel Island.

The citizens of Guernsey celebrate the anniversary of the Island's liberation from enemy occupation in World War 2 in May each year.

A parade is held, which features Gurkhas, veterans and Chelsea Pensioners, and the cadets were also involved in the annual inspection, carried out by the new Lieutenant Governor of Guernsey, Vice Admiral Ian Corder.

Trinity 500 for Tunbridge Wells

TUNBRIDGE Wells unit have taken delivery of a new Trinity 500 rowing boat thanks to the support of Cllrs John Davies from Kent County Council, who helped sponsor the boat.

At a naming ceremony at the unit earlier in the summer, John Davies named the boat The Rusthall after a village located a couple of miles to the west of Tunbridge Wells.

Cllr Davies then handed the boat over to the unit's Boats Officer, PO (SCC) Sonny Snell.

New HQ for Plymouth

PLYMOUTH unit has moved to a new permanent headquarters within the city's Naval Base.

To the strains of the HMS Drake Volunteer Band, 100 Sea Cadets from the unit

marched into their new home at Bonaventure House, in the South Yard area of the base.

And it was a case of the young meeting the old – Bonaventure House is the oldest standing building in any dockyard, having

been built in 1694 to support the then-new Plymouth dockyard.

Watched by family and friends the cadets took part in a brief service at which unit chaplain Peter Sweeting blessed the ship's company.

Guests included the Commander of the Naval Base, Cdre Ian Shipperley, who pronounced the building open for business.

He told the youngsters: "It is always a great honour to come to the Sea Cadets unit."

"You form a huge part of what we do in the Naval Base, including supporting us on the Hoe at the

Armed Forces weekend, always setting us a good example."

"It is good to be able to give the cadets their own home and somewhere they can call home in Devonport."

The Officer-in-Command of the unit, C/Sgt Jordan Throop, said: "This is a fabulous opportunity for the cadets to be in a sole-use building which allows us to have our own identity."

"This will enable us to undertake more activities and to offer more things to the cadets and the parents and to integrate them into the life of the Cadet Corps."



Thurrock on display

THURROCK unit put themselves in the shop window at one of the biggest retail complexes in the country.

The unit were given permission by intu Lakeside to set up displays in the area in front of the House of Fraser store.

Cadets and staff used the day as a recruitment and fundraising event, and took a Laser 3000 sailing dinghy into the centre to demonstrate to the public a little of what the Corps is all about.

Not only did the unit get plenty of exposure and pique the

interest of a number of potential cadets, but they also raised more than £450.

Lakeside, with almost 1.5 million square feet of retail floorspace, is one of the dozen largest shopping centres in the country.

Built on the site of a chalk quarry, the centre was completed in 1990 and now has more than 250 shops and 50 food outlets attracting around 500,000 visitors each week.

The site also has a 25-acre lake.

COMBINED Cadet Force (CCF) schools from the North of England took part in both the Junior National 12-hour race and competed for the Northern CCF Regatta at Southport Marine Lake, hosted by Waterside Lodge and masterminded by AI Taff Urie.

This was the first year that the Argos had replaced the Bosuns in the 12-hour, and the move introduced genuine competition against the GPs and Enterprises.

The highest placed Argo was eighth (Sedburgh School), while the lowest-placed Argo still had three other dinghies behind it.

Early light winds gradually freshened to Force 5 through the day, resulting in a few capsizes.

Crew changes in the pit lane became slicker with even sail numbers being replaced in a matter of seconds. One downpour early on in the race was the only blip in what was an excellent day's weather which genuinely tested the sailors.

At the prize-giving all the teams were presented with finishers' plaques and Sedburgh picked up the winning Argo and 'fastest lap' by an Argo trophy.

The other schools taking part were Durham, Merchant Taylors Crosby, Newcastle-under-Lyme and Sandbach.

On the Sunday, with a decent F3-4 breeze blowing, 18 boats took to the water for the CCF Northern Regional Regatta (incorporating the NE and NW



regattas).

There were three fleets of Picos, Qubas and Argos, and six teams – Sandbach A & B, Sedburgh, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Durham and 'Jumbles', being made up from remaining sailors.

Four races were sailed – two laps of a triangular course – with all classes starting together but each class being scored separately, with a discard allowed after three races.

The contest was keen, notably in the Qubas where it was a tie for first place, with the discard just giving it to Julius Staab of Sedburgh.

At this point the fleet retired for a break and reorganised for

the traditional Round the Island relay race, with the Argos off first, followed by Qubas and finally Picos.

Again, two schools were neck-and-neck at the finish, with Sedburgh just crossing the line ahead of Sandbach.

Some of the cadets who competed over the weekend only started their sailing with the half term dinghy course at Southport this year, and now can manage to compete in a full regatta and national competition.

Thanks are due to staff involved in transport, training and safety cover, especially to Taff Urie, who ensured that all the boats were ready to use.

Portrush welcome the Queen

WHEN the newly-crowned Queen visited Northern Ireland in 1953, she met one of Ulster's greatest World War 1 heroes, Sgt Robert Quigg VC.

Now, 63 years on, Portrush unit Sea Cadets and Royal Marines Cadets had the honour of welcoming the Queen (left) as she unveiled a life-sized bronze statue of Sgt Quigg in his home town of Bushmills, Co Antrim, and met relatives of the soldier, who died in 1955 aged 70.

Sgt Quigg, a Private with 12th Bn The Royal Irish Rifles, was awarded the VC in July 1916 after spending seven hours making forays into No Man's Land to bring back wounded comrades during the Battle of the Somme.

He took part in three successive attempts to reach the German trenches during the course of July 1, each of which failed as men were

mown down by machine-gun fire.

Early the next day, fearing his platoon commander was lying wounded, he went out seven times to look for him, each time bringing back a wounded man, including one dragged back from within a few yards of the enemy wire.

He only gave up at nightfall when the surviving members of his battalion were ordered back from the trenches.

Sgt Quigg was given his medal by the Queen's grandfather, King George V, at Sandringham.

The statue, unveiled days before the centenary commemorations of the Somme, faces up a street towards the village war memorial where Sgt Quigg's fallen comrades are commemorated, on a plinth of seven hexagonal stones, representing each of the seven wounded soldiers he rescued.



Quart Club thanked

GENEROUS engineers at Clyde Naval Base have helped support Helensburgh unit with a donation.

The Royal Navy Engineers' Quart Club held their charity dinner at Clyde's Wardroom, during which they held a raffle, raising a total of £250.

"The funding will allow the unit to purchase equipment aiding the cadets in their adventurous training," said Lt (SCC) Lesley Leckie RNR, CO of Helensburgh. "We are grateful to the Quart Club for this kind donation."

"As a registered charity we support 40 cadets with the aim of furthering their nautical and leadership skills."

Quart Club chairman Lt Cdr Rob Prideaux, who presented the cheque, said: "The Sea Cadets support the Quart Club on the evening of the Fundraising Dinner by selling raffle tickets."

"We have found that their attendance raises our fundraising tremendously and we are more than happy to have been able to support their endeavours."

Lions' share

CARDIFF unit cadets have picked up a number of Lions Clubs International Young Leaders in Service awards in recognition of their dedication to supporting the local community.

Twenty cadets and past cadets were presented with Gold and Silver Awards for supporting such events as the Royal British Legion's Poppy Appeal, the Festival of Remembrance Wales, and the Merchant Navy Association's Remembrance Parade.

The awards were presented by the Lord Lieutenant of South Glamorgan, Surg Cdr Peter Beck.

BEM awarded

A STALWART of Clydebank unit has received his BEM in recognition of his support to the unit and the wider community for the past 60 years.

Lt Cdr (SCC) George Troup RNR (ret'd) has organised and commanded every Armistice Parade since 1974.

He became CO of Clydebank in 1973, and was also District Officer for Clyde North.

A valued member of City of Glasgow RNA, George became chairman of Clydebank unit in 1999.



Corps officer makes mark with pace stick

HISTORY has been made by a blind veteran who is also an active volunteer at Bradford unit.

A team of blind veterans, including PO (SCC) Steve Birkin, came fourth in the World Pace Stick Championships – a hard-fought precision drill competition normally only open to fully-sighted military teams.

This is the first year that a civilian team has been allowed to enter, and the fact that the team was blind has made history.

There is even move afoot to see if it qualifies for the Guinness Book of Records.

PO (SCC) Birkin (pictured right with his prize) was a member of the Royal Navy for 12 years, and saw service in the Gulf War.

Two other blind ex-Servicemen, plus one sighted sergeant who is still serving in the



Coldstream Guards, made up the rest of the team.

All the teams have to reach a

strict standard, and the Blind Veterans qualified after knocking a team of Grenadier Guards out of the running.

A total of 25 teams took part in the pace stick championships, including international entries from Australia, Bahrain and Jordan.

Following the championships, the team led the Armed Forces down the Mall for the Queen's 90th birthday parade.

PO Birkin said: "Her Majesty is the patron of Blind Veterans UK and I was told later that we were the only team she actually stood for and clapped – I felt immensely proud."

The Blind Veterans hope to take part in a display in the Royal Albert Hall in London later in the year.

They then start practising again for next year's championships,

which Steve says they intend to win.

PO Birkin joined Bradford unit shortly after leaving the Navy.

Despite losing his sight, he still takes classes and is an active member of the volunteer staff.

Pace sticks are normally long pieces of wood hinged at the top which can be opened out to specific lengths.

Also a symbol of authority (and consequently often decorated with polished brass attachments), pace sticks are used by senior drill instructors to measure out the exact distances required between individuals or the length of marching step on parade.

A skilled user can 'twirl' the pace stick while marching, moving it from one leg to the other, and it is this skill that the pace stick championships test to the limit.



Partygoers ignore the rain

SEA Cadets ignored the inevitable rain and partied in honour of the Queen's 90th birthday and the Corps' 160th anniversary during June.

Pictured above are members of Doncaster unit, who attended the Patron's Lunch on the Mall midway through the month, and rubbed shoulder with celebrities as well as representatives of other charities which have the Queen as their patron.

One unit that organised their own street party was Cardiff (pictured below) – although their street was actually the cul-de-sac in Cardiff Docks where the unit's annex is located. No one seemed to mind.

The unit's Parents & Friends Association provided a mountain of sandwiches, crisps, chicken nuggets, biscuits, cakes, and "the most delicious home-made scotch eggs the staff had ever sampled."

Some of those celebrities who met Sea Cadets on the Mall – including journalist and presenter Dame Esther Rantzen, presenter and comedian Alexander Armstrong and Great British Bake Off presenter Mel Giedroyc – later sent birthday messages to the Corps to mark its 160th anniversary.

Others who lent their support included actress Sarah Parish, gardening expert Alan Titchmarsh, Olympic champion rower and former Royal Marines Cadet Paul O'Grady.

Captain Sea Cadets Capt Phil Russell said: "It's great to see that the impact we make on young lives doesn't go unnoticed with so many celebrities on board."

"Turning young people's lives around is what we do."

"Over the past 160 years the charity's inspired millions of young people to find their course in life by building confidence and skill gained on the water – it lasts a lifetime."

Many units – such as Reigate and Grangemouth – celebrated by making cakes, and some enjoyed joint celebrations during Armed Forces Day events.

A team from Sea Cadets HQ in London marked the birthday by visiting Waterloo Station to collect donations.



Liverpool cadets cross the Channel



● Cadets from Liverpool (West Derby) unit enjoy fine weather on board Sea Cadet training ship TS Jack Petchey

continue to Neiuwpoort in Belgium.

"Following this, we headed up into Holland and the port of Breskens, each time leaving the vessel for shore visits and a chance to record memories and stretch our legs, before finally returning to Ostende and the last

night before the train home.

"It certainly wasn't a pleasure cruise and involved hard work for all on board, but it was a truly incredible experience and thoroughly enjoyable."

When asked about her experience, Cdt Olivia said: "It was the best time ever."

"The offshore team were so lovely. They are one in a million."

Liverpool (West Derby) unit currently has space for new cadets and adult volunteers – see www.sea-cadets.org/liverpoolwestderby for more details or email tsliverpool219@gmail.com

War victims honoured

AS PART of Operation Aberhouth Tri – the Cadet tri-Service visit to France – cadets from Conwy County units attended a series of commemoration ceremonies in France.

Along with Army Cadets from Llandudno and Colwyn Bay and Air Cadets from 418 Aberconwy Squadron, as well as members of the Llandudno Town Twinning delegation to Wormhout, the cadets took part in commemorations at the town cemetery (pictured left), later taking part in the civic parade.

They also marked the centenary of the Battle of Mametz Wood – following a reception by the mayor in the village, which was bedecked with Welsh flags, the cadets viewed the memorial in the church which has inscriptions in French, English and Welsh.

The village retains strong links with Wales – the people of Llandudno were instrumental in the rebuilding of Mametz following the Great War.

Cadets also visited the memorial site of La Plaine au Bois, which stands in remembrance of those soldier POWs, several of whom came from Llandudno, from the Royal Artillery, the Royal Warwickshire Regiment and the Cheshire Regiment, who were slain by SS troops in and around a barn which stood on the site on May 28 1940.

This barn is a faithful recreation of the original, and stands as a monument to the memory of the men who died on that day.

The cadets, along with the Mayors of Esquelbecq

and Llandudno, and the twinning delegations, held a short act of remembrance and wreath-laying.

The cadets also visited the Canadian Memorial at Vimy Ridge – a towering limestone memorial commemorating the 11,285 missing Canadians who fell during the Great War. Following the memorial the cadets visited the recreated trench system.

The cadets also visited Thiepval, the location of the international state commemoration marking the Battle of the Somme.

Former Mayor of Llandudno Frank Bradfield said: "What a pleasure it was to see all the three Services of cadets working in unison during their visit to Wormhout."

"Their manners and conduct were exemplary and everybody was impressed with them reflecting the hard work and time put into their training by their officers and leaders."

Sub Lt (SCC) Jon Crowther RNR, CO of Conwy unit, added: "The collaborative working of all three cadet organisations highlighted what a superb asset the cadet movement is and what excellent cadets there are in North Wales."

AC Samantha, of Edinburgh District, was chosen to be a candle bearer at the Scotland overnight vigil at Edinburgh Castle which marked the centenary of the start of the Battle of the Somme on July 1 1916.



Family tribute

WHILE the nation honoured those who died at Jutland during services in Orkney and the major Naval bases, other acts of remembrance were on a smaller scale.

Members of the Saint family gathered at the Cocking village war memorial to pay tribute to Frank Saint (19), who gave his life for King and country during the battle and whose name is on the memorial.

Royal Marines Gunner Frank Saint (above) was in HMS Defence, flagship of Rear Admiral Arbuthnot, Commander of the First Cruiser Squadron.

Sent from Scapa Flow to blockade the German Fleet in the North Sea, on May 31 1916 HMS Defence came under heavy fire and was blown apart when shells ignited her magazine, killing all 900 or so souls on board.

In foul weather, a prepared bowl of red, white and blue petunias was laid at the war memorial, and a written tribute and photo of Frank were placed in the nearby Church of St Catherine for preservation from the weather.



Visit to lifeboat station

SHIPMATES from Falmouth branch visited Falmouth Lifeboat Station for a tour of the vessels and facilities (above).

On completion of the visit S/M Ian Hewson presented a cheque on behalf of the branch to Robert Thompson, the lifeboat's visits officer.

The branch also held a formal dinner to mark the centenary of the Battle of Jutland, with 50 shipmates and guests gathering at the Greenbank Hotel for what was believed to be the only such

Plan for Glamorgan anniversary

THIS year sees the 50th anniversary of the commissioning of County-class destroyer HMS Glamorgan – and the former ship's company are planning to mark the occasion with a get-together in the autumn.

The 5,440-tonne ship was built by Vickers-Armstrong in Newcastle-upon-Tyne and launched in July 1964.

She was first commissioned on October 14 1966 on Tyneside – her commissioning book records gifts from affiliated groups, including television sets for the mess decks and silverware for the wardroom from the

County of Glamorgan.

In 1982 Glamorgan was involved in the Falklands Conflict; during the last days Argentine navy technicians fired a land-based Exocet missile which struck the ship, causing damage and killing 14 sailors.

In 1986 she was sold to the Chilean Navy, and renamed Almirante Latorre, serving for 12 years until late 1998, and in April 2005 she sank while under tow to be broken up.

The 50th anniversary reunion, to which all former Glamorgan crew members of any commission and anyone who was involved

in building and fitting her out at Vickers-Armstrong are invited, will be held at the Leamington Spa RNA Club, in Riverside Walk, Adelaide Road, (CV32 5AH) on Friday and Saturday October 14-15.

There will be a gala dinner on the Friday with the reunion the following day. Numbers for the gala dinner are limited to 120 and will be on a first-come, first-served basis.

Further information can be obtained from Martin Slater on 0151 286 6992, 07728 701 166 or email martinslater126@outlook.com

Victims of battle honoured

A WELL-attended meeting of Bude branch welcomed one new associate member, as branch padre/welfare secretary, and two guests.

Gladys Jose, Company Captain of 1st Boys Brigade, received a donation of £200 for the benefit of the Brigade.

Also present was Adrian Abbott, whose great uncle LS Sydney James Abbott, aged 23, of King Street, Bude, was killed on board HMS Defence at the Battle of Jutland.

At the end of the meeting, the branch paid full respects to Sydney and four other ex-shipmates who died in that battle – Stoker 1st Class Lewis Vincent, 35, in HMS Defence, CPO Claud Yeo, 39, (HMS Indefatigable), Mid Henry Percival Coode Cotton, 17, (HMS Malaya) and ERA Mansel George Griffiths, 27, (HMS Lion).

Shipmates raised a tot to their memory and observed a minute's silence.

Adrian had undertaken a considerable amount of research which was available for inspection, and also very kindly had sponsored the tot in their memory.

Rev David, however, did not get off lightly on his inauguration and was invited to present Prayers – members felt certain he had done all that before.

A report of Area 4 business was presented following the Liskeard meeting.

Other correspondence was dealt with swiftly – finances were sound, but there were one or two concerns on the welfare front.

The branch nominated the local charity to support as the local benefactor of four churches within which departed branch padre Russen Thomas was a preacher.

Plymouth maintain recruitment drive



A group of 36 shipmates visited the National Arboretum at Alrewas, Staffordshire, taking a particular interest in the National Naval Memorial (pictured above).

Two survivors of HMS Ardent, lost in the Falklands Conflict, paid their own tribute at the Ardent Memorial.

An evening of excellent hospitality thanks to Tamworth branch and a visit to Stratford-upon-Avon on the return journey completed a memorable weekend.

The success of previous Armed Forces Day inspired the Plymouth City Council to hold the event over two days.

Plymouth RNA was once again privileged to be sited in the Royal Navy Village, and with an estimated 80,000 visitors to the event over both days, it meant a busy time for the branch.

Some 16 shipmates participated over the weekend, distributing around 4,000 RNA hats.

First Sea Lord Admiral Sir

Philip Jones visited the stand, enjoying the usual hospitality.

Other visitors included then-Armed Forces Minister Penny Mordaunt, local MP Oliver Colville, Commander Devonport Flotilla Cdre Paul Halton, Naval Base Commander Cdre Ian Shipperley and Lord Mayor Cllr Pauline Murphy.

The branch is grateful to WO1 Alex Orr, RN Armed Forces Day coordinator, for his invaluable help throughout the weekend.

Blades support Falklands fund

A CHARITY event has been staged at Sheffield United Football Club's Bramall Lane stadium to support survivors of the sinking of HMS Sheffield during the Falklands Conflict who want to return to the site of the wreck.

The evening, which featured food, drinks and a football tournament for a grassroots football club, was held as part of a wider initiative to fund the journey of Falklands veterans and dependants to return to the wreck of the Type 42 destroyer, which sank during the 1982 Conflict.

The HMS Sheffield D80 division of the South Atlantic Medal Association 82 benefitted from the event, which saw Sheffield Rangers FC take to the pitch.

Also supporting the veterans was Singh's Premier store, a local

business which donated more than £500 to the cause, taking it to more than £1,800.

A group of ex-shipmates hope to raise £8,250 – representing the number of miles the shipwreck is located from Sheffield.

John Widdowson, a former member of the ship's company who attended the event, said: "It was a truly great evening at Bramall Lane and I'm extremely grateful for the support of both Sheffield United and Singh's Premier store in making it possible."

Dave McCarthy, Operations Director at Sheffield United, said: "It was great to be able to support this brilliant cause in such a unique way."

For more information or to donate see www.justgiving.com/fundraising/SAMA82-HMS-Sheffield-D80



Weymouth marks Anzac connection

LAST year marked not only the centenary of the start of the Allied campaign in Gallipoli and the first major deployment of forces from Australia and New Zealand, but also in June the arrival at Weymouth of the first batch of sick and injured Anzacs from Anzac Cove at Gallipoli.

This year, on Anzac Day, the town held the usual Civic Service at the Anzac Memorial on the seafront opposite the Hotel Prince Regent (above).

Wreaths were laid by the Mayor and representatives of Australia House and New Zealand House in London, ex-service organisations, London Legacy and expats living or working in Weymouth.

June 1 2015 marked exactly 100 years since the arrival of the first Anzacs who were billeted at the Hotel Prince Regent.

To mark the occasion in Weymouth's history, the Weymouth & Portland Residents Association made a special commemorative plaque which was unveiled by the Mayor.

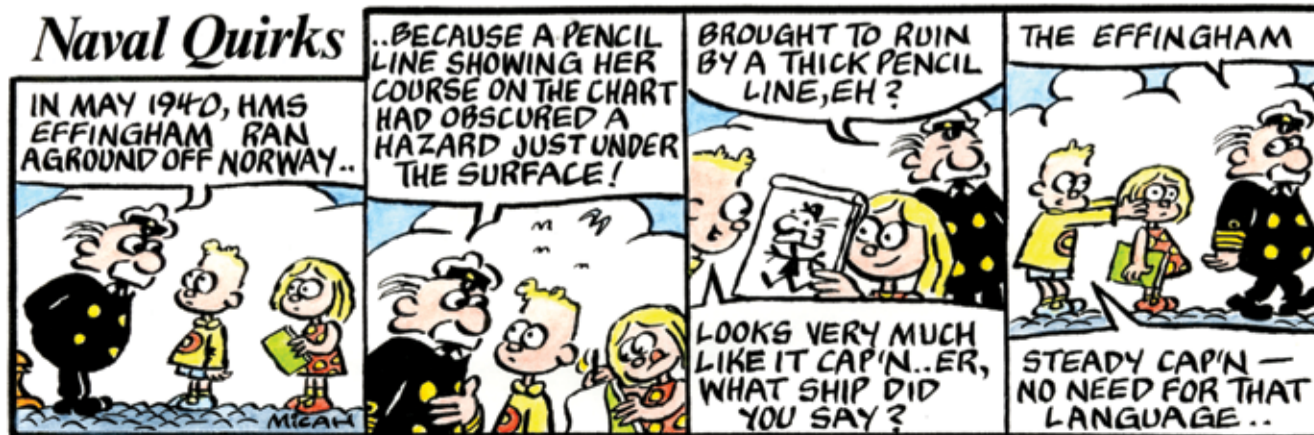
The representatives of the countries involved were presented with identical plaques to be sent back to their homelands.

Book even earlier

IN last month's Conference report it was suggested prospective conference delegates and observers for Perth 2017 should book early.

The dates had changed, but the reported dates were the old ones – so it might be wise to book even earlier, as the correct dates are Friday June 2 to Sunday 4.

Booking Forms are available in the RNA Circular online.



Support for Lincoln

ROYAL Naval personnel assigned to Joint Electronic Warfare Operational Support Centre (JEWOSC) at RAF Waddington continue to forge and uphold links with the various Lincolnshire RNA branches by supporting them at commemorative events.

At the end of May the city of Lincoln, led by Lincoln branch, held a Battle of Jutland memorial service at the war memorial in St Benedict's Square.

A number of RN personnel, headed by Cdr David Hewitt, Senior Naval Officer at the JEWOSC, attended and supported the RNA and local Sea Cadet unit during the memorial and city centre march past.

Cdr Hewitt was invited to lay a wreath on behalf of the RN, after which the Senior Service contingent visited St Mary Le Wigford Church with the City of Lincoln Mayor and Sheriff for refreshments.

The following month, Cdr Hewitt was invited to lay a wreath on behalf of the Royal Navy during the City of Lincoln Armed Forces Day celebrations.

VC memorial

FIVE members of Bangor branch in Northern Ireland had the privilege of attending the unveiling of the Victoria Cross Memorial Stone in the grounds of Bangor Castle – the Town Hall.

The event was held to mark the centenary of the award of the VC to Edward Bingham for his conduct as Commanding Officer of HMS Nestor, and in charge of a flotilla of destroyers, at the Battle of Jutland.

Birthday party

MEMBERS of St Austell branch helped shipmate Arthur Frazer celebrate his 96th birthday at their annual dinner meeting at the Bosun's Diner, Charlestown.

S/M Arthur, the oldest member of the branch, served onboard HMS Victorious for the duration of World War 2.

£50 PRIZE PUZZLE



THE mystery submarine in our June edition (right) was HMS Dreadnought, which in March 1971 became the first Royal Navy vessel to navigate to the North Pole.

The correct answers were provided by M Franklin, of Fareham, who wins the £50 prize. This month it's a mystery aircraft (above), which was used extensively to train Observers.

The first of its type made its initial flight at Luton in the summer of 1951.

The aircraft pictured at Culdrose ended up at a former RAF airfield a few miles south-west of Stratford-upon-Avon, where it remains to this day.

1) What type of aircraft is it, and 2) what was the name of the former RAF station?

We have removed the serial number of the aircraft.

Complete the coupon and send

MYSTERY PICTURE 258

Name

Address

My answers: (1).....

(2).....

Boy hero of Jutland inspired young Sam

COVERAGE of the Jutland 100 commemorations prompted memories of service in a ship with a Great War link for Roy 'Sam' Weller.

The former electrical mechanic was first inspired to a career in the Royal Navy when, at the age of 14, he saw the picture *Faithful unto Death*, featuring Jack Cornwell VC standing by his gun in HMS Chester amidst the carnage of Jutland.

"He was my hero, so I decided that it was a life at sea that I wanted," said Sam.

He started with the Sea Cadets, then learned about serving as a Boy Seaman so promptly went to the local recruiting office and signed up.

"In February 1946 I started my 12 years from age 18 as a Boy Seaman 2nd Class at HMS Ganges," he said.

"Later in my career I was able to transfer to the new electrical branch and became an EM1.

"My first draft in my new role was to the destroyer HMS Comus – the namesake of the light cruiser of the Grand Fleet, as I found out from the excellent information on the battle in *Navy News*.

"The 8th Destroyer Flotilla was based in Hong Kong, and



● C-class destroyer HMS Comus

our first patrol was off the Malayan coast, finding and sinking the communist insurgent gun runners.

"Then came the Korean war. We sailed from Hong Kong to join the UN fleet – it was a sight to see.

"It was very like the Grand Fleet, but the ships were of all different nations, including carriers and one American battleship.

"For us the war consisted of bombarding enemy positions and vital road, rail and inshore

targets such as sea mine factories, and playing 'Bird Dog' following carriers, picking up ditched pilots of severely damaged aircraft who could not land on the flight deck.

"Then in the early morning of August 24 1950 we awoke to the sound of 'Action Stations'.

"There were two enemy aircraft attacking us as we lay anchored offshore behind enemy lines.

"We were strafed and bombed; one bomb hit the ship's side and blew a hole in No 1 boiler room, with one fatality.

"The sea boat was wrecked and there was cannon-shell damage to the upper deck.

"We managed to limp back to Kure, our base in Japan, escorted by a cruiser.

"We were out of the war for several months whilst the Japanese dockyard repaired all the damage.

"A little while after this I was relieved and returned home for my killick's course.

"So I think that we added to the battle honours of the four previous warships of our name."

Quart Club donation

THE Bristol branch of the Royal Naval Engineer's Quart Club (RNEQC) has donated £1,000 to St Peter's Hospice.

The money was raised through various activities held by Bristol and Bath branches during 2015 and 2016, but most came from

the Bristol Mangold Dangling championships, organised by the RNEQC every July.

Mangold dangling is the ancient art of combat where teams of six compete to knock each other off barrels with a suspended sack of rags called a mangold. The competition has become the highlight of the RNEQC's social calendar.

In 2015 the event was sponsored by BMTCadence, a safety, environmental and risk management consultancy.

A cheque presentation was made by Lt Ian Le Poidevin (RNEQC) and Craig Spacey (BMTCadence) to Louisa James, from St Peter's Hospice.

Bristol branch treasurer Lt Dave Barnes said: "The Bristol Branch of the RNEQC has built a strong relationship with St Peter's Hospice over the last couple of years and we hope to continue this in the future.

"All the RNEQC branches raise money for local charities, hoping to strengthen ties and have a greater effect within the communities where they are based."

The RNEQC, which dates back to the 1930s, is a social and charitable organisation open to all Royal Navy Engineer Officers, both serving and retired.

Bristol branch meets on the second Tuesday of every month at various venues; Bath branch meets in the Pultney Arms on the first Monday of the month.

If you are a Royal Naval engineer and are interested in getting involved with the RNEQC in the Bristol or Bath area please contact Lt Ian Le Poidevin on ian.lepoidevin544@mod.uk

↓ RNA Central Office, Room 209, Semaphore Tower (PP70), HM Naval Base, Portsmouth PO1 3LT.

↓ admin@royalnavalassoc.com

↓ 023 9272 3747

↓ www.royal-naval-association.co.uk

Q-class ceremony

NEXT year marks the 75th anniversary of the commissioning of the first of eight Q-class destroyers, two of which served with distinction in the Royal Australian Navy.

In 1938 Britain was considering new destroyer requirements, and the plan evolved into the Q to Z-class ships, of which the Q-class became the Third Emergency Flotilla.

In 1941 Australia was offered the opportunity to man five N-class ships, which they did, and three Q-class destroyers.

Lack of suitable personnel meant they could only take up two – HMAS Quickmatch and Quiberon.

All eight ships were commissioned between April 1942 (Quentin) and January 1943 (Quail), and they saw action in a number of theatres, from the Atlantic to the Pacific.

Quentin was torpedoed by aircraft and sank under tow to Malta, while Quail was lost to a mine in June 1944.

After the war three more of the sisters – Queenborough, Quality and Quadrant – were sent to the RAN (Quilliam went to the Dutch navy) and most were converted to Type 15 anti-submarine frigates.

A Sunset commemoration and wreath-laying ceremony will be held at NSW Penrith RSL on Thursday March 16 2017, with a lunch the following day.

Portland 60th

AROUND 100 shipmates, including guests from other branches in Area 4, helped Portland members celebrate the 60th anniversary of their branch at a dinner.

RNA president Vice Admiral John McAnally presented the branch with their 60 year certificate.

In response he was presented with a hand-made engraved whiskey tumbler.

The branch vice chairman also introduced a commemorative glass star to mark the diamond anniversary. The star is engraved with a tribute to the memory of Norman and Ivy Watson, who did so much for the branch.

Plane day

A group from the Southampton Royal Naval Officers' Association visited the Royal Navy Historic Flight at the invitation of the CO, Lt Cdr Chris Gotke.

The visitors saw two Swordfish under maintenance in the hangar in preparation for the summer display season.

As well as inspecting other aircraft, the group was treated to a short flying display by Lt Cdr Gotke in the North American AT-6D Texan.



Past meets present

The Loch Class Frigates Association had a successful reunion in Plymouth.

As part of the programme members were invited to attend the passing out parade of new recruits at HMS Raleigh.

From arrival to departure they were well looked after by the instructors, and after lunch in the Wardroom they were given VIP seats to watch the parade – after which they met some of the new generation of sailors (pictured above).

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Return of bell to Diamond

I AM ex-RAF and was stationed in the Suez Canal Zone from 1953-55.

My job was driver for Officer Commanding RAF Station Abyad.

My hobby was studying ships passing through Suez and Bitter Lakes.

I spent a lot of time in the control tower at Deversoir Point.

At Christmas 1954 HMS Diamond and Decoy were invited to spend Christmas at the Phoenix RAF boat club. During this time the ship's bell was stolen by some RAF idiots.

The Commodore of the boat club, Grp Capt Christmas, was a friend of my boss and knew of my interest in the canal and I was given the task of returning the bell to Diamond in Port Said.

I was allowed to use my staff car and together with an escort vehicle set off on a memorable journey.

Part two came in 2012 when I wrote to Cdr Ian Clarke on the new HMS Diamond to tell him of this story.

He returned a letter together with a photograph of both the new bell and the old bell and a thank-you for the return.

I am very pleased to have been part of this incident.

I wish all members of the Royal Navy a safe and enjoyable life.

Harry Hills
Keighley, Yorkshire

Excuses from visit to Malta

I AM 86 and wanted to share some of my memories before I die and thought I'd offer a couple of jokes from the early 1950s.

Defaulters: Two men are charged with being absent without leave. The first, a young AB said that he had been in Straight Street (The Gut in Malta) and had taken a 'gharry back for the ship in very good time but the gharry horse dropped dead'.

The second AB, a three-badge man, said he had been in Straight Street and had taken a 'gharry back for the ship in good time but the way was blocked by a dead gharry horse'.

Defaulters: A man is up on a serious charge. The captain tells him "If there were a shred of evidence you would go to detention for 90 days, as it is 14 days No 9 punishment".

Douglas Holder
Cambridge



Drum was painted by Picasso

I WONDER if you could solve a question for me?

I have enclosed a photograph of the harmonica band on HMS Gipsy in which my father Ted Clarke (Nobby) served.

I remember being told that the artist Picasso was on the ship for some reason, hitching a ride I guess.

As a thank you he painted the drum for the band.

I think the drum went down with the ship as I can't find any information about it. (HMS Gipsy sank off Harwich after striking a mine in November 1939).

I remember dressing up in their lovely gipsy clothes, emerald green silk blouses and red bandanas.

My father is on the far left in the back row.

Pam Nelson
Pamnelson@btinternet.com

Breakfast of peas on toast

THE photograph of the old coal-burning mining tender Nightingale in the May edition of *Navy News* reminded me of an incident in early 1956.

I was a young AB undergoing ASDIC training in HMS Vernon. For Easter leave that year I was Retard Party to cover security.

The regular ship's company of Nightingale, which was lying alongside in Vernon Creek, were also on leave.

For the two weeks of leave period a party from Vernon were to stay onboard as security. Only four were required to stay onboard at night and we took it in turns to cook meals in the small galley. It was the responsibility of the cook of the next day to collect the victuals from the Issue Room at Vernon.

One bright spark decided that, on the way to collect next day's grub, he would call in at the Junior Rates Beer Bar for a pint. He met an old oppo and consumed a large quantity of ale.

He returned onboard forgetting to visit the Issue Room.

The following morning he was woken to go to prepare breakfast. But on arrival realized that he had forgotten the scan.

Searching the galley he found some bread and a few tins of Pussers peas.

The only time in my 30 years' Service that I had peas on toast for breakfast.

Mike North
Isle of Wight

Did nurses get medals?

I SAW a programme recently showing Naval nurses have now been awarded a Falklands Campaign medal for their Service, despite some not going until after the conflict had finished.

I served in RMS St Helena with FSU01 involved in mine-clearance duties. At the time we were told there would be no mine-clearance medal awarded and that we did not qualify for the Falklands medal.

I know there was a campaign to get this rectified but since leaving the Service I have lost touch and was wondering if anything has changed regarding this matter?

Steve Buttler
West Midlands

Communications can be confusing

Each month Pusser's Rum are offering to courier a bottle of their finest tipple to the writer of our top letter. This month's winner is Mac McKay



To add to the confusion senior rates of the G and T specialisations who had previously been referred to as Radio Supervisors (RS) and Communications Yeoman (CY) were now both branded Petty Officer (Communications) PO(C), with no distinction in title despite carrying out different legacy roles.

This was further complicated by those who had joined as an RO(U), trained as both RS and CY, and who also bore the title PO(C).

The OM branch was deemed unsuccessful and the Communications Information Systems (CIS) branch was established in its place.

Still with me?

Despite not doing any seamanship training, junior rates within the new branch were confusingly titled AB(CIS) and LS(CIS). The submariner equivalent was CISSM.

THIRTY years ago I joined the Royal Navy as a Junior Radio Operator 2nd class (General), shortened to JRO2(G).

At this time the communications branch consisted of RO(G) and RO(T) in the surface fleet, RO(SM) in the submarine flotilla and shore-based WRNS were called WRO.

When women were allowed to serve in ships in the early 1990s, those who volunteered from the branch became either WRO(G) or WRO(T), with non-volunteers' Sea Service remaining as WRO.

To sum up, at one time in the early 1990s, we had branches and sub-branches within the RN Communications Group – RO(G), RO(T), RO(SM), WRO(G), WRO(T), WRO and RO(U), with RS, RS(SM) and CY at the senior rate level.

Around this time training was combined into one communications branch – the RO(U) or simply RO.

Then the Operator Maintainer (OM) branch was established and, surprisingly, utilised the defunct badge of the WEM branch it was replacing.

Those who joined up or cross-trained were titled either OM(C) or OM(CSM) to add to the already long list.



● John Clarke's models of HMS Devonshire and HMS Resolution



Memories from a model-maker

TWO articles in the April issue of the *Navy News* caught my attention – Michael Chiver's article about HMS Antrim, and David Brown's model of HMS Warspite.

I have built model boats and ships. I built a 1:265 scale model from scratch, mainly from balsa wood and some thin ply, of HMS Devonshire. This had a two-channel radio control, motor control and rudder. I built a gearbox to enable contra-rotating screws.

Another scale model was of HMS Resolution, which was intended to be a functional model, but I didn't complete the installation of the radio control.

The model was started when I was standing by

the build in Barrow. It was made mainly of thin marine ply and some fibreglass for the bow and stern. The scale is 1:102.

Having been on a nuclear course (NPLC 12) in HMS Sultan I offered the model, as a static model, to the nuclear school in Rutherford Block. This was accepted, and as far as I know it is still there on the half landing of the stairs to the classrooms.

After I left the Navy I worked for Rolls-Royce and Associates and I offered the model of HMS Devonshire to be raffled in aid of Guide Dogs for the Blind Association. It raised £180.

John Clarke
ex-CCEA Stbd, Resolution

LETTERS to the editor should always be accompanied by the correspondent's name and full address, not necessarily for publication. If you submit a photograph which you did not take please ensure you have permission to use it. The editor reserves the right to edit submissions.

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● Some of the contents of the Culdrose Wrens time capsule, which was buried in 1974
Picture: PO(Phot) Paul A'Barrow

Memories of 1974

A TIME capsule buried at RN Air Station Culdrose is to take pride of place at a new exhibition at the National Museum of the Royal Navy in Portsmouth.

Next year marks the centenary of the formation of the Women's Royal Naval Service and will see the exhibition, entitled *Women and the Royal Navy*, launched on March 8 2017 – International Women's Day.

The capsule was placed beneath an accommodation block on October 2 1974 by Commandant Mary Talbot, head of the Wrens, during a £5 million base refurbishment programme.

It contained everyday items that defined the life of a Wren 40 years ago, including badges, descriptions of their trades, clothing and official documents. Three blocks provided quarters for 230 Wrens, with many sleeping six to a room.

One of the Wrens who was on parade to watch the ceremony in 1974 was a Writer Pay, 21-year-old Catherine Beckett, now Cathy Timmins, who retired after working at Culdrose UPO for many years and whose husband Glynn, a former sailor, is the Central Fund Manager.

"Life at Culdrose was much more of a community as the majority of people lived on board," said Cathy.

"Besides the Naafi there was the Automat where you met up in free time and after the bop on a Thursday and Sunday night."

"There was a cobbler, the Navy tailors, the chip wagon came on the base twice a week and the Naafi wagon went round the base."

"Wrens still had to sign in if you were under 21. We were also

expected to sign into the WRNS Quarters.

"Needless to say, as the camp was much more open then we would sign in and go out the back door."

"On the nights of the dance the duty PO Wren Reg would patrol round the quarters."

"We lived in messes of 12 with a leading rate at the top who was privileged to have a very small cabin."

"There were about four baths to cover about 48 of us, and a twin-tub washing machine or you did your washing by hand – though we were allowed to send our shirts and collars to the laundry free of charge."

"When they dug up the capsule Sue Sharkey and I went together. It was quite exciting to see the items as the majority would not be recognised today."

"I think my overall memories of the WRNS is the fact we were unique with our own identity."

"Some of the friendships you made have lasted a lifetime."

"We had a lot of fun, but the skills you learnt stood you well."

"Culdrose to me was, and I still feel is, a unique place. In a way it is your family."

"Having been drafted to Drake after Culdrose I realised how much freedom we had – too many bigwigs around..."

Of the capsule, Base Warrant Officer WO Bridgette Turner said: "This is a really great collection of what life was like for the girls serving here at Culdrose."

● If you have served and have any interesting artefacts the National Museum of the Royal Navy would be interested in hearing from you.

Please email them at exhibitions@nmrn.org.uk



● Commandant Mary Talbot buries the time capsule at Culdrose

Deaths

Rear Admiral Hugh A H G Edleston. HMS Rhyll, Excellent, Beachampton, Cochrane, Dundas, Euryalus, Glamorgan, Dryad, Southampton, Glasgow and Cardiff, also JSDC, UKMARBATSTAFF and Naval Party 1061, June 13.

Capt John T Checketts. HMS Victorious, Ariel, Fulmar, Daedalus, President, Nuthatch, Theseus and Merlin also MOD DGA(N), DN Plans, Procurement Exec, NA Rio de Janeiro. June 6.

Cdr Frank D Wilson. HMS Eagle, Fulmar, Ark Royal, Excellent, Royal Arthur, Fearless, Nelson and Osprey, also CinCNavHome Command. April.

Cdr John M Woollen RNR. List 1 RNR. Aged 83.

Lt Cdr Timothy O Adkin. 1832, 1849 and 1850 Naval Air Squadrons. April.

Lt Cdr George W Barras. 830, 815, 750 NAS, HMS Seahawk, Hermes, Ark Royal, Heron, Fulmar, Peregrine and Victory (RNB). June 11. Aged 85.

Lt Cdr Steven V Bridges. HMS London Dryad, Ganges, Fife, Sultan, Amazon, Andromeda, Cambridge, Guernsey, Tamar and Heron. June 13. Aged 69.

Lt Cdr Charles H Cantan. 899, 800, 750 NAS, HMS Heron, Osprey, London, Invincible, Minerva and FO Naval Aircraft. June 7.

Lt Cdr Peter D Elburn. HMS Fife, Sea Eagle, Warrior, Charybdis, Def Op Analysis Establishment, ATE Teddington and NATO. June 21. Aged 80.

Lt Cdr Ian B MacLeod. HMS Triumph, Birmingham, Urania, Fulmar, Heron and Hermes. May 18. Aged 80.

Lt Cdr Neville A Rendall. HMS Eagle, Pembroke, Ambrose, Alliance, Maidstone, Illustrious, Ceylon and Jamaica. June 3. Aged 87.

Brian Arnold WO MEA(M). Served 1963-98. HMS Ganges, Corunna, Protector, Bulwark, Fife, Leeds Castle and Active. Loan Service Belize, FOSF, DG Ships Bath and IFOS (Nelson). July 3. Aged 68.

J R 'Jim' Goodwin CPO Mech. Served 1953-75 in 11 ships, including HMS Implacable, Cavalier and Tyne. The Royal Naval Engineerinor Association. June 20. Aged 80.

Walter Kerkhoff LME. Served 1944-57 in HMS Brisenden, Indomitable and Mauritius. The Royal Naval Engineerinor Association. June 19. Aged 90.

James H 'Blood' Reed PO. Joined HMS St Vincent 1937 and aged 16 as Boy 1st Class served in HMS Iron Duke Norwegian Campaign and North Sea Patrol, then HMS Glasgow Mediterranean and Eastern Fleet.

Reunions

September 2016

Algerines Association reunion from September 12 to 19 at Mill Rhyte Holiday Village, Hayling Island. Now deemed 'Military Heroes Week', this is running under the umbrella of the Algerines Association, the NVA Association, the Wrens Association and all RNA branches, but the event is open to all branches of the military, Army, Navy and RAF, as well as family, friends and neighbours – all welcome. Contact George Patience on 01456 450659 or post to 97 Balmacaan Road, Drumnadrochit, Inverness IV63 6UY.

HMS Gambia Association: AGM and reunion at Tillington Hall, Stafford, from September 16 to 19. Contact Shirley Winn of IOW Tours at enquiries@iowtours.com, tel 01983 405116, or John Andrews at babsjo2@hotmail.co.uk or tel 01970 358095.

October 2016

Cunningham 40 Reunion: To mark the 30th anniversary of the 1986 class of Cunningham 40 there will be a reunion at the Union Jack Club on October 1. Although we have a reasonable representation of class members we are still missing some classmates and staff. If you know of anyone who joined Cunningham 40 on September 29 1986 or served as staff in Cunningham division at that time please direct them to contact Lt Cdr Paul O'Reilly at paul.oreilly616@mod.uk or tel 01229 872151.

November 2016

HMS Raleigh, New entry 48/01 November 26 2001: All personnel, serving or civilian, who joined the Royal Navy on November 26 2001 are invited for a reunion to take place on the 15th anniversary of entering HMS Raleigh, to be held on November 26 in Plymouth. If you are interested look for '48/01 Entry Reunion' on Facebook or contact John Millard via e-mail at johnmillard19@googlemail.com

March 2017

HMS Newfoundland & HMS Kenya: Veterans' annual get-together from March 31 to April 3 at the Sketchley Grange Hotel, Burbage, Leicestershire. Reunion includes three nights half-board accommodation, gala night Saturday, Saturday coach tour to Nottingham and river cruise including cream tea and sandwiches, and Sunday coach tour to Leicester and Foxton Locks, plus three nights' entertainment. If you served on any Fiji/Uganda-class cruisers, aka the Colony Class, you and your family members are welcome. There is no official business, just a weekend of meeting friends and lamp-swinging. Also available for two nights. Contact Isle of Wight Tours, tel 01983 405116, or Alan Waite at alan04@live.co.uk or tel 01162 833266.

June 2017

HMS Fisgard, Artificer Apprentices Reunion to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the entry classes S29, S30 and S31 joining HMS Fisgard in 1957 will take place from June 9 to 11 with the reunion dinner on Saturday June 10. The Royal Beach Hotel, opposite South Parade Pier in Southsea, has been booked and secured with a deposit. Details and booking form from Malcolm Howard at malcolmhowardexrn@yahoo.co.uk or tel 023 9226 4785.

Sports Lottery

June 18: £5,000 – AB2 K Evans; £1,800 – AB D Godwin; £800 – Sub Lt G Salloway; £600 – WO1 B Hutchison; £500 – Lt C Kavanagh; £400 – WO2 G Clelland.

June 25: £5,000 – AB T Porritt; £1,800 – CPO T Wilson; £800 – PO K Scott; £600 – Surg Lt Cdr L Stevens; £500 – AB A Eakins; £400 – AB T Horton.

July 2: £5,000 – Sub Lt J Maddison; £1,800 – Wtr N Wells; £800 – PO R Shaw; £600 – LH A Cooper; £500 – AB T Flynn; £400 – AB C Houghton.

LS onboard Vanoc on Atlantic Convoys, with Force H on Operation Torch in the Med. Promoted AA GI at HMS Excellent aged 21 then joined HMS Indomitable at Scapa Flow to join war in the Pacific. Continued Service till 1952 in Royal Fleet Reserve. Later started the RN Boys Memorial project to remember those killed in Service before the age of 19. Memorial stone in Portsmouth Cathedral was followed with his Books of Remembrance in Devonport, Chatham, Portsmouth, Liverpool and RNAS Cerberus, Melbourne, Australia. Hon Member of HMS St Vincent and past member of Gunner's GI Association. June 18. Aged 94.

David 'Scouse' Southward PO(AEA). Served 1975-99. TAS in HMS Gurkha then transferred FAA, NAM HMS Euryalus 1981; NAS 737, 703, 829 and 815 Portland; NATEC at Daedalus and Martsu. Westlands and BAE Saudi Arabia post-RN. June 24. Aged 57.

John Clarke REA(AIR). Served 1949-63. HMS Fisgard Series 7 Entry, Frobisher Division as Artificer Apprentice, continued training HMS Collingwood and HMS Aerial then served HMS Eagle, RNAS Lossiemouth, Eglinton and Aerial, RAAF Edinburgh, Woomera Australia (Firestreak weapon trials) and RNAS Daedalus. Civilian Team Manager GCHQ Cheltenham. Magnificent 7 Artificer Apprentices. June 27. Aged 82.

Gerald 'Jan' Pring LJA AH2. Served 1951-80 at RNAS Gamecock, Siskin, Daedalus, Ariel, Peregrine, Gannet, Condor, Goldcrest, Ariel, Seahawk and Falcon, in HMS Eagle, Centaur, Illustrious, Victorious, Ark Royal, Hermes and Fearless, also HM Barracks Drake, Nelson and Victory. The Aircraft Handlers Association. May. Aged 82.

William 'Plug' Girdwood LMEM. Served 1956-67 HMS Narvik, Vanguard, Zest, Rhyll and Caesar. July 8. Aged 76.

Royal Naval Association

Frieda Y Feetham, Army Land Girl. Associate member of Norwich branch. June 18. Aged 88.

Leslie W 'Bill' Perks AB. Served 1943-46 on Arctic Convoys and at D-Day in HMS Walker, also Nimrod, Ferret, Orlando, St Angelo, Fabius and Nile. Life member Royal Leamington Spa RNA. Legion d'Honneur & Ushakov Medal. May 30. Aged 91.

John Hill PO. Served HMS Ganges and HMS Vanguard. Ex-police. Standard Bearer and Chairman of Southend RNA. June.

Roy Godwin RNPS. Southend branch. June 19.

Brian Braund Stoker. Founder Member and past Branch Chairman of Bude RNA also supported Bude & Stratton RBL. July 10. Aged 81.

Reginald 'Reg' Baker A/LS: Served 1943-46. Margate RNA and HMS Ajax Association. June 22. Aged 92.

Association of RN Officers and RNOC

Capt Michael W Sylvester CBE. HMS President, Sultan, Seahawk, Daedalus, Nuthatch, Nelson, RM Condor, MOD DNR and DGA(N) DGPS. June 29. Aged 94.

Cdr Chris M Lightfoot. HMS Euryalus, Grenville, Ganges, Torquay, Shoulton, Dryad, Salisbury, Fisgard, Intrepid, Cochrane, Newcastle, Mercury, Fearless, Abdiel, Alderney and Centurion. June 7. Aged 67.

Lt Cdr Keith A Broach. HMS Heron, Nelson and Centurion. June 27. Aged 78.

Lt Leslie Garrett. June 6. Aged 89.

Lt Colin Taylor. June 24. Aged 80.

Submariners Association
Vice Admiral 'Tubby' Squires. Served 1948-81 in HM Submarines Tabard, Ambush, Aurochs, Aeneas, Porpoise, Dreadnought and Warspite, also served as FOSM. Dolphin branch. June 30. Aged 89.

John Holland AB. Served 1948-55 in HM Submarines Talent, Truncheon, Tabard, Sturdy, Tradewind and Aurochs. New Zealand branch. June 16. Aged 85.

Brian Newton EM1. Served 1956-65 in HM Submarines Tabard, Turpin, Excalibur and Sturdy. South Kent branch. June 14. Aged 80.

John Bond PO Stwd. Served 1963-75 in HM Submarines Dreadnought (63), Orpheus (64), Anchorite, Ambush (64-67), Onyx (67-72), Olympus (72-73) and Repulse (73-75). Scottish branch. June 20. Aged 69.

David 'Dave' Temple Sto1. Served 1943-47 in HM Submarines Scythian and Solent. Sunderland branch. July 3. Aged 90.

HMS Illustrious Association

Fred Dornier Stoker 1st Class. Served HMS Illustrious 1940-41, onboard during the bombing of the ship at Malta resulting in him being invalided out. March 30. Aged 96.

John 'Jack' Cranny PO. Served 1952-61 in various ships, involved in nuclear bomb tests. Author of an informative book about the Liberty Boat disaster in Portland Harbour October 17 1948 with the loss of 29 lives, and undertook the project of a memorial culminating in the unveiling in 2010. Honorary Member. March 16. Aged 82.

Adrian Ismay LRO(T) on board Illustrious 1983-84 and also served in HMS Minerva. March 16, 12 days after being injured in a terrorist bomb explosion in Belfast.

Entries for the Deaths and Reunions columns, and for Swap Drafts, in September's Noticeboard must be received by **August 9**

NOTICEBOARD ENTRIES


- Notices for this page should be brief, clearly written or typed and addressed to – The Editor, Navy News, Navy Command, Leach Building, HMS Excellent, Portsmouth PO2 8BY, or email: edit@navynews.co.uk. If you are sending your notice via email, please include your full address and telephone number.
- Reunions appear in date order, and requests to place an entry in a particular edition cannot be guaranteed.
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Key battles, benchmark books

THE centenary of World War I has prompted much new literature, two of the best examples of which have crossed my desk this month, writes Prof Eric Grove.

The first is *Scarborough Bombardment: The Attack by the German High Seas Fleet on Scarborough, Whitby and Hartlepool* by Jann M Witt and Robin McDermott (ISBN 978-3-944594-50-7). This results from an Arts Council award to Scarborough Museums Trust for a commemoration of the German naval bombardment of Scarborough, Whitby and Hartlepool in December 1914.

It led to cooperation between the trust and its military adviser Robin McDermott and the *Deutscher Marinebund* and its historian Dr Jann M Witt which has culminated in a co-authored and bilingual book that takes a remarkably objective look at the operation.

The traditional British view of the operation is that this raid was a wanton act of German 'frightfulness' aimed specifically at the civilian populations of the towns. Certainly the loss of non-combatant life, especially the deaths of women and children, allowed plenty of scope for propaganda denunciations of 'Hun baby killers' to encourage greater voluntary enlistment in the British Armed Forces.

Dr Witt's research in the German archives has demonstrated a more nuanced view. The intention of the raids was to draw out a portion of the Grand Fleet to inflict attrition so that its strength might be reduced to a point where a general fleet action might be possible. This would be done by an attack – based on rather flawed intelligence – on 'legitimate' strategic targets in the three towns. The Royal Navy had already bombarded targets in German occupied Zeebrugge with significant civilian loss of life.

The most interesting fact to emerge is that in their attacks on Scarborough and Whitby the German battle-cruisers Von Der Tann and Derfflinger only used their secondary 5.9in (150mm) and tertiary 3.5in (88mm) guns in a rather vain attempt to limit collateral damage. Some 333 5.9in and 443 3.5in rounds were fired. Accuracy was not great due to the need to fire using the relationship of the targets to visible landmarks and the heavy swell running. Only about 100 significant hits were noticed by responsible British witnesses. Eighteen people were killed and over 80 injured. The two German ships then moved on to Whitby, 20 miles to the north, to take out the coastguard station, regarded by the Germans as a 'signal



● Propaganda posters urges men to sign up and avenge the Scarborough 'atrocities'

station and a guard house'. Some 106 5.9in and 82 3.5in rounds were fired, killing six people ashore.

At Hartlepool the coastal defences led the Germans eventually to use their big guns. The ships engaged were the battle-cruisers Seydlitz and Moltke and the interim semi-battle-cruiser Blücher. The last named was allowed to use her main 8.2in main guns from the outset while the other ships began with their smaller guns. When British shore batteries opened fire and scored a hit on Moltke the latter began to use her 11in guns, albeit with reduced charges. The German fire failed to knock out the shore batteries because of poor visibility and heavy swells. What shells that did hit only had limited impact as they were designed for ship versus ship action; many went over the target and landed in the town. In all, 1,150 rounds were fired damaging 300 houses, five hotels, ten public buildings and seven churches. Among more strategic targets, damage was inflicted on the shipyards, steelworks, the gasworks and railway station. Eighteen military personnel and no fewer than 114 civilians were killed and 200 injured. The light cruiser HMS Patrol sortied but was damaged and forced to beach. The small British submarine C-9 was forced aground when shelled on the surface. All three German ships were hit by defensive gunfire with the loss of eight men and 12 wounded.

The overall German plan had, however, gone wrong. The German fleet commander von Ingenohl, worried about exceeding the Kaiser's instructions by coming out at all in support of Admiral Hipper's battle-cruisers, had already turned for home. This was a terrible missed opportunity for

the Germans who, unknowingly, had come close to achieving their dream result of a fleet engagement with a portion of the Grand Fleet. Admiral Beatty's battle cruisers supported by a powerful but isolated battle squadron under Admiral Warrender had been sent south to intercept Hipper. Warrender's screen came into contact with Ingenohl's but the latter, fearing contact with the entire Grand Fleet, turned for home.

Hipper was left rather in the lurch but, covered by rain and fog, managed to elude the British and reach Wilhelmshaven. Germany's propaganda made much of the affront to British maritime security its ships had inflicted but, rather as the British after Jutland, within the High Sea Fleet there was a sense of failure. As Admiral Scheer, then in command of a battle squadron put it: "The feeling of having missed a rare opportunity remained and the recurrence of such an opportunity was probably hardly to be expected after this incident." When he became Fleet Commander the following year he would find this was only too true.

Admiral Beatty, the British battle-cruiser commander, was also frustrated. As he wrote to Jellicoe: "There was never a more disappointing day ... we were within an ace of bringing about the complete destruction of the enemy cruiser force and we failed." He blamed his subordinate light cruiser commander Goodenough for failure to report properly but he should also have blamed his Flag Lieutenant, the incompetent Seymour, for his own signalling failures. Getting rid of Seymour at this stage might have had positive consequences both at Dogger Bank and Jutland, but Beatty stuck with his incompetent subordinate. Interestingly there

were other echoes of these events at Jutland. Goodenough became an impeccable reconnaissance officer and the much maligned Sir Robert Arbuthnot, who had failed to open fire on the Germans without specific instructions so allowing the enemy to escape, immolated both himself and his later flagship by his aggressive initiative ahead of the Grand Fleet on May 31 1916.

The book is a significant contribution to the history of the Great War at sea. It is a most attractively produced and well illustrated hardback, excellent value at £14.92 – a rather odd price reflecting its publication in Germany by Palm Verlag of Berlin. It is easily available at a still lower price on the internet making it even more exceptional value; highly recommended!

As for Jutland itself, the battle now benefits from a new detailed analysis by Dr John Brooks (*Cambridge University Press*, £34.99 ISBN 978-1-107150-14-0). The author is a noted expert on gunnery and fire control, on which he has already written. That work had revealed the need to go back to the original despatches written by flag and commanding officers. As Dr Brooks puts it "these despatches are indispensable as contemporary, personal reports of the battle as experienced by those that were there." He adds to this foundation a comprehensive survey of other sources both original and secondary. He has also used German sources, notably the unpublished English translation of the official German history by Kapitän Otto Groos.

The author begins with a succinct survey of 'building the battle fleets' including their supporting vessels. He shows how the British retained their desired 60 per cent superiority over the Germans in dreadnoughts, although things were more even numerically in light cruisers, destroyers/high sea torpedo boats and larger submarines. He also analyses the balance between the Grand and High Sea Fleets as perceived by the British command. His conclusion is telling, fair and hard to deny: "In their efforts to claim a greater share of naval resources both Jellicoe and Beatty probably exaggerated somewhat the inadequacy of their ships and numbers. But the pervasive pessimism in their communications and their willingness to believe the worst, even without any corroboration from the intelligence returns, suggests they were prey to genuine and potentially demoralising fears."

The next chapter is a brilliant analysis of vital technologies;

signalling, fire control, ammunition and torpedoes. Dr Brooks explains how signals could be by flag, mechanical semaphores, lights or wireless. By 1916 Jellicoe reported he could make manoeuvring and action signals by wireless as well as visually. The content of manoeuvring and deployment signals is described as are developments in British signalling. The differences and similarities between the British system and the German are also clearly explained.

The author then moves on to gunnery. As might be expected, there is an admirable section on British fire control and the ways guns were aimed and fired and fall of shot spotted. The director system is covered as are the questions of ranges and firing rates. The vexed questions of British shells, their effectiveness and deficiencies, and British cordite propellant come next with special attention to the Battle-cruiser Fleet, whose poor shooting and deficient ammunition handling was to lead to disaster. Even more interesting, if anything, is the following discussion of German gunnery. What is especially significant are the limitations of our knowledge at the moment of this subject. We need German speaking historians of Dr Brooks' quality to make a thorough study of German gunnery and fire control. As it is, he has produced what is the best available analysis of the subject. Dr Brooks concludes his analysis with a useful comparative study of torpedoes and their tactics, weapons that played a crucial role in the battle's outcome.

The next chapter looks at 'Orders for Battle', examining the 'key expectations and concerns' that provided the context for the development of Jellicoe's much-maligned Grand Fleet Battle Orders and how they differed from Beatty's Battle-cruiser Orders. The latter do seem to have been rather more offensively orientated. Dr Brooks admits that it is "difficult to explain why British commanders were so certain that the Germans would use mines and submarines in a fleet action, threats that exercised an 'unwarranted dread' that did much to neutralise British superiority."

The book then moves to a detailed chronicle of the battle. Any serious study of the events of this battle must now start with this in-depth account.

Dr Brooks' penultimate

chapter looks at the 'striking' contrast between the fates of British and German ships and their crews and "to examine how these different outcomes were influenced by the key technologies... and the tactics adopted by both sides." It is interesting to see how both Beatty and Jellicoe did their best to cover up the deficiencies in ammunition-handling arrangements and unjustly blame the design of their ships.

The fundamental problem was German hits were much more likely to cause catastrophic explosions. As well as deficient ammunition handling there were other factors. British propellant burnt hotter than German and was all stored in silk bags with exposed igniters. The Germans also had better turret venting, a feature not usually noted. As Dr Brooks concludes: "Any one of these differences need not have been decisive. But

their effects were mutually-reinforcing and together they ensured that British charges ignited more readily and burnt faster, and that a propellant fire, once started, propagated more rapidly through British turrets and even into magazines. Taken together they constitute a more than sufficient explanation of why, if a

propellant fire was started in a British ship, it was so much more likely to develop chaotically into a catastrophic explosion."

There is much else in the technological conclusion before the final chapter entitled 'Unpalatable Truth' using the adjective used by Jellicoe to describe the result of the battle-cruiser action. This fairly assesses the leaders. Hipper and Scheer generally emerge well. Jellicoe gets credit for some aspects of his leadership and understanding for his problems.

Dr Brooks concludes that "if he did not during the night live up to the Nelsonic ideal, it was due to the subconscious effects of an overmastering fatigue and a profound anxiety about underwater weapons." As for Beatty, "he did not live up to his own image – there was little that was truly heroic in Beatty's leadership at Jutland."

The text is illustrated by comprehensive tables, notably signals. This adds to the reference value of the book. The only disappointment is the clarity of the maps could have been improved.

Overall, however, as Prof Andrew Lambert says on the dust cover, the book is "a master class in naval operational history" that "provides a new benchmark, the foundation text for all future studies."



A double chance to win books on the Great War

THANKS to the jolly nice folk at Pen and Sword and Frontline Books we have not one, but two (count 'em) competitions this month to give away three copies each of two new hardback nautical tomes.

Nearly a decade ago, Paul Kendall compiled what was – and probably remains – the definitive account of the world's first commando raid, Zeebrugge.

The stirring feat of arms attempted (but largely failed) to bottle German submarines up in their Flanders bases. It was, however, a huge tonic to morale at a time of low Allied fortunes in WW1.

Voices from the Past: The Zeebrugge Raid 1918 (Frontline, £25 ISBN 1473-876710) is very much a companion volume to Kendall's earlier work.

That was, largely, a history of Operation ZO, its planning and

execution, with biographies of those who carried it out.

The emphasis on the latest tome is on the experience of Zeebrugge, through the eyes of those who were there. Hence the book is crammed with first-hand accounts, mostly drawn from the archives of the Royal Marines' and Imperial War Museums – so by and large they've not seen the light of day in nearly a century.

As raids go, Zeebrugge has passed into history, overshadowed by equally daring deeds such as the Campbeltown raid at St Nazaire in early 1942, or the Dambusters the following spring.

Similarly all but lost to time is the



Royal Navy's work with lighter-than-air craft at the turn of the 20th Century: airships.

At the heart of the aerial revolution was the dapper airship pioneer Wing Cdr Neville Osborne, whose remarkable story is recounted by Guy Warner in *Lighter Than Air* (Pen and Sword, £25 ISBN 1473 82902X).

Osborne would lay the foundations for the force of small airships which conducted lengthy, tedious anti-submarine patrols in the second half of the Great War – and would help determine the fate of the U-boat.

But he was also involved in the struggle to defeat the Zeppelin menace – send a thief to catch a thief.

In 1915 and 1916, the aircraft of the day were simply too slow to reach the typical altitude of a Zeppelin and attack it in good time.

The solution was one of the most bizarre aircraft ever invented – a biplane hanging beneath a blimp, the AP-1.

On its test flight in February 1916, the bizarre contraption climbed to around 4,000ft, the airship became unstable, the controls of the aircraft were damaged and it detached from the blimp, plunging to the ground killing Osborne – depriving the RN of an "irreplaceable" figure.

To win Paul Kendall's book tell us the

name of the Belgian port attacked in a follow-up raid a month after Zeebrugge.

And to take home *Lighter Than Air*, give us the nickname of Her Majesty's Airship No.1, the order for which marked the birth of British Naval aviation.

We have three copies of each tome to give away.

Answers must be sent to Zeebrugge or *Lighter Than Air* Competition, Navy News, Mail Point 1-4, Navy Command, Leach Building, Whale Island, Portsmouth, PO2 8BY.

Alternatively, drop an email with the answer and your details to zeebrugge@navynews.co.uk and lighter@navynews.co.uk. Entries must be received by mid-day on September 14 2016.





Triathlon grows in popularity

FORMER Bootneck Mark Ormrod competes in the Royal Marines Rehabilitation Triathlon at Commando Training Centre.

Around 200 competitors from all three Services took part, as well as personnel from both the United States Marine Corps and the Royal Netherlands Marine Corps.

The event, supported by the Royal Marines Charity, Help for Heroes, Castle Triathlon Series and Sodexo, was an impact-free competition comprising of (depending upon ability) either 200m or 400m swim, 12km or 24km cycle and concluding with a 2km or 5km indoor row.

The competition could be completed as a whole by individuals or as a three-person relay team.

Event organiser Lt 'Mo' Morris said: "From starting as an in-house rehabilitation event four years ago with no more than about a dozen men attending I cannot believe that it has now grown into such a big event in the rehabilitation sporting calendar."

One of the competitors, 35-year-old former marine Gavin Bolger, who was injured in Afghanistan, said: "I was the last person I thought would suffer mental issues, but you have to have a strategy to get through it – keeping your mind active and keeping physically fit. That's why events like this are great for recovery."

"As a marine, you may get injured but you crack on, you don't get a green beret by quitting."

The successful and testing event ended with an evening reception and prize giving.

Six of best for cup win

SIX members of Commando Helicopter Force were in the triumphant HMS Heron side at the Royal Navy Hockey Cup final.

Capt Richie Moore, Lt Rich Jenkin, WO1 Dave Alcock, CPO Conrad Butt, LWtr Charlotte Penny and Wtr Lisa Johnson all featured in the finals at HMS Temeraire.

Having won the regional play-offs in Plymouth the previous month, HMS Heron's first game was against a strong HMS Nelson side which ended 3-1 to Heron, setting up a final against HMS Sultan.

The first half ended with Heron holding a 3-2 lead but Sultan came out of the blocks faster in the second half and soon levelled.

The strength of Heron saw them finish the match 6-3 to win the Navy Cup and go on to face the winning teams from the Army and RAF.



● Paragliders from all three Services soar towards the dark clouds covering South Wales

Pictures: LPhot Caroline Davies

Navy paragliders rise to challenge

ROYAL Navy paragliders picked up a host of medals as the RN Paragliding Association fielded its largest team in years for the Inter-Service Championships.

Rising star Midshipman Alison Barrett, pictured right, competing in her first competition, rose above her RAF and Army counterparts by winning the Intermediate Class.

Having only qualified last year at the Alpine Training Centre in Bavaria, courtesy of the Joint Services Adventurous Training Scheme, Alison is a relative newcomer to the sport.

She made up part of the ten-man (and woman) team, captained by C/Sgt Grant Oseland RM, which also included pilots from the Fleet Air Arm, Surface Flotilla, Royal Marines, Royal Navy Reserves and Submarine Service.

C/Sgt Oseland won the Royal Navy Open Class and finished in second place in the Inter-Service Open Class.

He also won the first task of the week with a 22km flight across the Welsh valleys from Merthyr Common to Crickhowell.

The competition was taken to the wire and was won on the last race as overall winner



SAC(T) Tom Garner pipped C/Sgt Oseland to the post by a mere 800 metres.

The championships took place at the Joint Services Paragliding Centre in South Wales and was run in a similar fashion to yacht racing.

A start time was declared and pilots were not allowed to cross the start line before this time.

The window to start the race is usually about an hour, allowing the pilots to use tactics and observe the weather and other pilots before committing to fly.

They are then set a task which usually includes flying over a series of waypoints before they reach the end of the race, known as the goal.

Points are scored against time and points deducted if they miss a waypoint. Over the week scores are added to individual scores and team scores.

This year the RAF won the overall team prize but the Navy won the individual Intermediate Class and was second in the Individual Open Class.

Prizes were also awarded for last year's Inter-Service Cross Country (XC) League which was won by the Royal Navy team, a competition measuring the accumulated distance by each team throughout the year.

But it was not all competition during the week and it is used as a training opportunity as well as the chance to thank all the support staff that are essential to making the week such a success.

The RAF provided opportunities for tandem flights for all the drivers who retrieve those pilots who don't quite make "goal" and scatter themselves over the Welsh countryside.

Sailors take Tri-Service crown

THE Royal Navy fielded a 28-strong team in the annual Services Offshore Sailing Regatta in the Solent.

Guernsey was the destination and the 11-strong fleet soon split up. The voyage, which some yachts took nearly 35 hours to complete, proved testing, with high winds and rain.

RNAS Rear Cdre WO1 Mark Durkan said being aboard a J109 was akin to being inside a washing machine on a slow spin.

When racing restarted off St Peter Port, two inshore courses were undertaken.

The following day a third inshore race took place in 30 knot winds.

With spinnakers up and racing down each wave, each crew needed their wits about them, the concentration required to sail fast and safe was immense, the shipping lanes required crossing whilst optimising all the factors that make a yacht go quickly in a direction that is tactically superior to your competition.

Finally the finish line appeared early on day four off Galkicker back in the Solent.

The race committee had calculated that the 135 miles that the J109s had to cover would see them finish at the same time as the shorter course Victoria 34s.

Only when the results of the week were posted was it confirmed that the Royal Navy were the 2016 champions.

Prizes were awarded by Air Marshal Sean Reynolds, Admiral of the RAF Sailing Association, and Capt Graham Robinson, one of the trustees of sponsors BFBS.



● Action from the Services Offshore Regatta

West are best at golf contest

SEVENTY-ONE players competed in the 2016 RN Golf Championship at Dalmahoy Golf and Country Club, Edinburgh.

The main event involved regional teams comprising eight golfers playing 36 holes each day. They compete to become the team matchplay and strokeplay champions, and this year saw the Western Region win all four of their matches.

The Fleet Air Arm made 26 fewer shots than their nearest rival, the Western team, to win the team-strokeplay event.

The general competition was won by CPO Andy Cobbold (Abbeywood), with POPT George Wright (NBCC) second.

Yet again Lt Cdr Lauren Hulston (824 NAS) proved a strong competitor in the women's competition and, although Lt Cdr Claire Harris (PJHQ) led the field at the half-way stage, Lauren hit back for victory with PO(CIS) Nikki Wade (DSCIS) runner-up.

Claire won the Nett competition with Lt Amy Bolland (EDG) coming a close second.

WO Lee Mccathie (MCM1), returning to the Championships after an absence of three years, held his nerve to submit a fourth steady score to leapfrog Lt Chuck Norris (824 NAS) to win the individual event.

PO Craig Merralls (Yeovilton), was runner up.

The prizes were presented by Royal Navy Golf Association President Rear Admiral John Clink.

Victorious in Vancouver

A TEN-MAN Royal Marines squash team triumphed on a tour to British Columbia in Canada.

The players competed in seven fixtures, four in and around Vancouver, two on Vancouver Island and one in Whistler.

The first match at the Evergreen Squash Club saw the hosts claim a victory before the visitors moved to play three fixtures at the prestigious Jericho Tennis Club.

The matches against Jericho and Bental Athletics Centre were close affairs with one loss and one win.

The third match, against Vancouver Rackets Club, saw the hosts win comprehensively.

The marines took the opportunity to yomp to the top of 1,127-metre tall Grouse Mountain as well as visit Capilano Suspension Bridge, Stanley Park, the sea to sky gondola and Brandy Wine Falls.

The second phase of the tour saw the team move to Vancouver Island to play the Canadian Navy and Air Force, with the Royal Marines emerging victorious in both.

The final match was played in Whistler at the Meadow Park Sports Centre, where the visitors claimed a 6-4 victory.

Record-breakers

AN indoor rowing world record was smashed by ten minutes at an event held to promote the sport to HM Forces at HMS Sultan.

A combined team made of serving members and veterans from across the Royal Navy, Army, Royal Air Force and the Sub7 indoor rowing club, took on the challenge of setting new world and British record time for 100k, in the Concept2, 30/39 years category.

The team completed the challenge in 4 hours 34 minutes and 45.7seconds with a 1:22.4 split.



Army just can't Hackett...

THE Royal Navy reclaimed the Hackett Rundle Cup at Tidworth Polo Club.

A record 6,000-strong crowd saw the Senior Service overcome the might of the Army to take back the trophy after four years.

The match began with Lt Hiro Suzuki displaying his skill with two goal attempts in the opening moments. But it was the Army's Lt Rishi Ahluwalia who put his team ahead at the end of the first chukka.

The second chukka was a scrappy affair which ended with the Navy ahead thanks to Lt Suzuki.

The game really sprang to life in the third chukka. With combined ages of 92 (Army) and 168 (Navy) it looked like experience would triumph as Cdre Adrian Aplin scored a wonder goal from 40 yards to increase the Navy's lead to 4 ½ to two.

After three consecutive defeats in the Rundle Cup, the Royal Navy were determined not to squander the lead but a foul saw Jamie Drummond-Moray drill down a 30-yard penalty.

The Army had a chance to narrow the deficit further with a 60-yard penalty but the shot went wide and the Royal Navy took the trophy by 5 ½ goals to three.



"We are absolutely over the moon," said Cdre Aplin, who was named most valuable player. "Four years in waiting and we deserved that win."

Cdre Aplin received the Rundle Cup from president of the RNPA, First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Philip Jones.

Lt Suzuki's pony for two of the chukkas, Conneka, was named best playing pony.

Twenty staff and Phase 2 trainees from Victory Squadron at HMS Collingwood were on duty at the event, which began

with the traditional Jockey v Eventers match in aid of The Inspire Foundation.

The Inspire Foundation Wheelchair Race followed and then Max Lopez piloted Raj to victory in the polo pony race, getting up by half a length to beat former jockey Will Kennedy on the rapidly closing Hermanito.

Match two saw future polo stars demonstrate their skills with the Pony Club Jorjocks exhibition match.

The REME and Royal Navy parachute teams put on a magnificent display,



● President of Royal Navy Polo, First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Philip Jones, presents the Rundle Cup to Cdre Adrian Aplin Pictures: CPO Phot Rob Harding



despite high winds and poor visibility.

Cloud cover meant that the guys jumped from the low height of 1,600ft, increasing the level of difficulty and danger. Despite this, they all landed safely and won many admirers. Her Majesty's Royal Marine Band from HMS Collingwood led the UK Armed Forces Polo Association team onto the ground to face the USA for the Indian Cavalry Polo Trophy.

The Americans put up a hard fight but it was the UKAFPA who won the day

with a convincing performance that won them the match 5 goals to 1 ½.

The Navy's victory meant a double win as their polo players also won the Inter-Regimental match at Guards, with Lt Cdr Steve Spiller named the most valuable player.

You can follow Royal Navy polo on Facebook.

Anyone interested in taking up the sport should contact RNPA Secretary Cdr Al Wilson at allan.wilson206@mod.uk

All for one and one for all... Royal reward for riders

FOUR personnel from the Merlin helicopter force at RNAS Culdrose competed in the **One and All Games** in Cornwall.

Teams of four were put through a variety of physical challenges designed to test their fitness levels as well as their ability to work efficiently and effectively as a team.

The weekend started on the track with a strength workout with all four from the air station's gym Crossfit Taranto managing a personal best lift which put them in the top half of over 50 teams.

The next two events saw the team sprinting, carrying logs, kegs and dragging tyres which played to their strengths and through a measured strategy and excellent communication, the team moved up to lie third overall at the end of day one.

The competition moved inside on day two and the next three workouts involved a mixture of bodyweight exercises and more technical movements such as the dreaded thruster and ground to overhead lifts.

The team produced a solid performance again, however

a team penalty of 20 burpees meant they dropped five places to eighth. This was still enough to qualify for the semi-final, however starting with an 80sec time deficit was always going to be difficult to claw back and the Taranteos finished a very respectable ninth overall.

Lt Alex Kelley from 829 NAS said: "As a team we had never even trained together before but discussed each other's strengths and weaknesses before the competition started."

"I put our success down to great communication, teamwork and commitment to each other. I was so proud of us and how we gave everything for each other during every workout."

CPOPTI Donna Chapman from RNAS Culdrose said: "The good thing about crossfit as a training programme is it is constantly varied, involves body weight movements, gymnastics and Olympic lifting."

"It is important you receive proper coaching but it is up to the individual how much they decide to lift and all movements can be scaled."

ROYAL Navy cyclist CPO Rob Smith returned for this year's Go Outdoors **Mountain Mayhem** 24-hour race at Gatcombe Park.

"I last did Mayhem about five years ago, I always wanted to return but thought I'd wait a bit to see it bed into the new venue," said Rob, who finished in second place in the mixed pairs event with Carole Welch.

"The course was hard, not too technical but it had several very tough climbs towards the end of the lap," said Rob. "One Army guy was wondering how a lap that was all climbing managed to end up back at the start with no perceivable descents."

One of the perks of racing in the Princess Royal's back garden is that she gives the prizes.

"Considering we've never raced together and the whole idea was formed over a beer during a stage race last year I think we did a great job, taking second place and I got to meet a real Princess."

■ Royal Navy cyclists came home with the team award in the national 12-hour time trials held in Wales.

The Royal Navy and Royal Marines Cycling Association featured strongly on the starting list and unimaginable distances



● Princess Anne congratulates Rob and Carole; Below: Rob taking part in the mountain bike race Pictures: Karen Brammer

for most riders were covered.

Gary Drew rode 274.606 miles in 12 hours, Leon Marshall, 267.522 miles, Jim Scott, 252.921 miles, Stuart Edwards, 250.453 miles and in the tandem category, Bob Richards and Mark Gorman with 233.148 miles.

The race was won by Danny Grieves of GS Metro with 294.142 miles but the combined efforts of the RNRMCA team were sufficient to put them in first place, making them National Champions in the team category.



On crest of waves

BUDDING Royal Naval observer Sub Lt Sandra Olmesdahl of Britannia Royal Naval College, has been crowned the Ladies Tri-Service **Surfing** Champion for 2016.

As well as winning the individual title, the 27-year-old helped the Royal Navy Women's team achieve second place overall in the competition held at Penhale Beach, Newquay.

Originally from Cape Town, South Africa, where she competed regularly, Sub Lt Olmesdahl moved to the UK to join the Fleet Air Arm and put surfing behind her for several years.

She was able to get back into the water properly on completion of the first phase of initial Naval training and took part in the Royal Navy/Royal Marines Surfing Championships earlier in the year – the first time she had competed in seven years.

Not only did she win the Ladies Open competition she was also the runner up in the Men's Longboard division and earned her selection for the Royal Navy team to face the Army and RAF in the tri-Service contest.



Plate win is cold comfort



NAVAL Service ice hockey teams battled Service opponents – and the odds stacked against them – to come away from a week of intensive competition with one trophy and their heads held high.

Service ice hockey has been on the rise in the military sporting calendars in recent years, achieving 'recognised' sports status.

For one week, military ice hockey players travel the length and breadth of the UK (and this year from the Falkland Islands, Germany and deployed units) to converge on Ice Sheffield for the annual Tri-Service and Inter-Service championships.

The Tri-Service Championship (TSC) sees teams at establishment, corps and command level compete in a non-checking competition (games last 30 minutes) during the day for the Tri-Service Cup, Plate and Bowl.

The RN Ice Hockey Association has won the cup twice since 2006.

Meanwhile the evenings are set aside for the Inter-Service Championship (ISC), which sees the RN, Army and RAF go head-to-head in full contact fixtures (three 20-minute periods).

The Navy won the title in 2007 and 2008, with the RAF reigning for the next four years and the Army taking over from 2013.

This year, the RNIHA entered two teams in the TSC – the RN Kings and RM Bootnecks – which included players from 30 Cdo IX RM, CLR, CHF HQ, RMR Cardiff, 40 Cdo RM, 42 Cdo RM, 845 NAS, 652 Sqn AAC, HMS Duncan, Fleet Phot Group, 815 NAS, HMS Daring and RNAS Yeovilton.

Even before they hit the ice they knew it would be a tough week, as the high tempo of operations had stripped the squad to the bare minimum.

This year's TSC saw a dozen teams competing – the largest competition yet.

The two RN teams were in separate leagues, with the Kings up against the REME Stallions, Army All Stars, RLC Chiefs, RAF Cosford Stars and RAF Lossiemouth Jets; the Bootnecks faced the RE Sappers, Infantry, Combat Service Support, RAF Bluewings and RAF Vulcans.

After two days, the Kings had won three, drawn one and lost one to leave them third, qualifying for the Plate finals.

The Bootnecks, having won two and lost three, finished fourth and also followed the Plate route, setting up a meeting with the Kings in the next round, along with the Jets and the Bluewings.

The Kings beat the Bootnecks 5-1 in an early game on day three, and with a further win (Jets) and defeat (Bluewings) the Kings were through to the Plate semi-final – where they again met the Bootnecks.

They had drawn with the Jets and lost to the Bluewings, and were keen to put on a better show at the end of day three than they had at the beginning.

It was the closest RN vs RM game in recent history, but once again went the way of the Kings, who set up a showdown in the Plate final against the Bluewings, leaving the Bootnecks to scrap for third place.

The RN Kings started the Plate final with a burning desire to overturn

a previous loss to the Bluewings in the TSC – the RNIHA has had a team in the last four TSC finals without success.

That all changed as the ten sailors, over three 15-minute periods, cycled through to conserve energy and dominated the early stages.

Against the form book the Kings built a 3-0 lead, and were 4-1 up by the 30-minute mark.

An inspirational team talk by ET(ME) Parker (HMS Daring), who led the team all week, drove them on to a 6-3 victory.

The Bootnecks put in a valiant effort but lost 4-2 to the Lossiemouth Jets.

The best players in each Service suited up each night for a high-intensity and physically demanding ISC game on top of their hectic schedule during the day.

The first fixture saw the RN Destroyers take on the RAF Aces, with the 14 players of the RNIHA (two goalies and 12 skaters) facing a full bench of 24 airmen who were fresh off the back of a week's training camp.

The game started well, but as the heavy hits rained in, the ability of the RAF to rest players between shifts meant pressure mounted on the Destroyers, and despite a monumental effort the Aces came out on top.

A notable effort was made by Mid Martyn Gray RN (RNR Leeds), the stand-out RN player in the game.

Next up for the Destroyers were the Army Blades, with the disparity in squad sizes again going against the Navy.

With the soldiers defending their title they forced the Navy onto the defensive for most of the game, unable to get a foothold in the fixture.

Having despatched the Destroyers, the Blades went on to beat the Aces and retain their title.

By the end of the week the TSC teams had played ten games each and the players were on the ice for 315 minutes over four days and a further two full 60-minute games in the evenings.

The TSC Cup was won by the REME Stallions, the Bowl by the RLC Chiefs.

Amongst the winners of Most Valuable Player (MVP) awards were ET(ME) Parker (Kings MVP and tournament MVP) and Mne James of 40 Cdo (Bootnecks MVP).

www.rniha.org.uk or via RN PDev Portal, or see Royal Navy Ice Hockey on Facebook.



Pictures: LPhoto Stephen Burke

